

GUATEMALAN FIREFIGHT



# SOLDIER OF FORTUNE

The Journal of *War* Correspondents

**82nd  
AIRBORNE'S  
URGENT  
FURY**

**MUJ DRIVIN'  
IVAN HOME**

**MOSSAD HITS  
PLO TERROR  
CHIEF**

**HIGH-VELOCITY  
HOAXES**



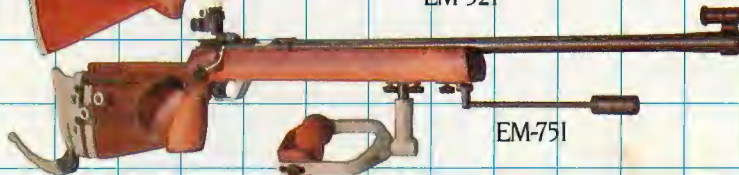
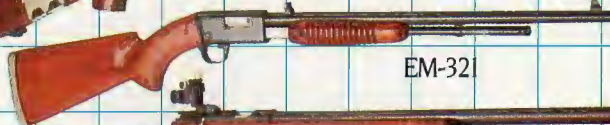
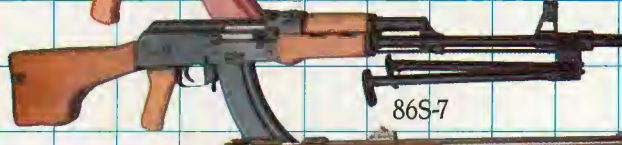
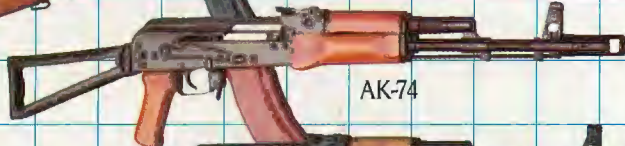
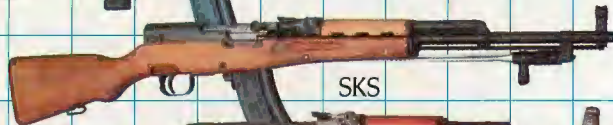
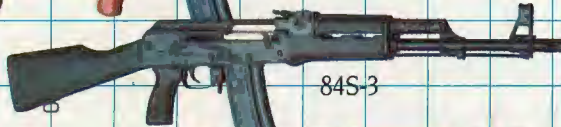
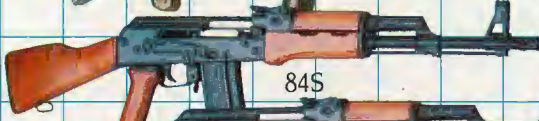
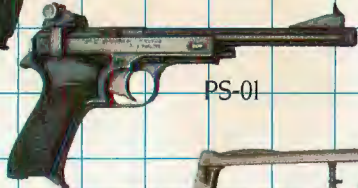
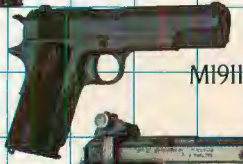
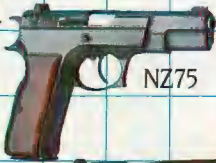
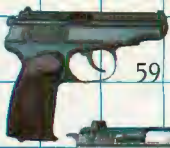
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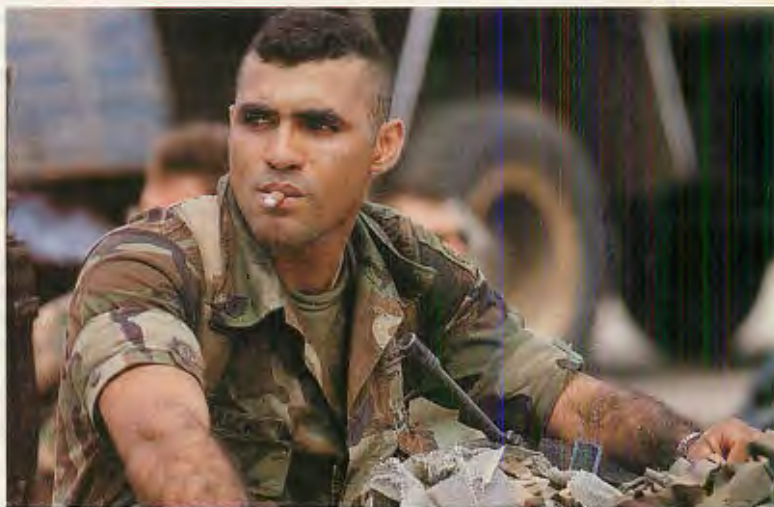
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## COVER

**COVER:** These U.S. Marines, along with special operations forces and the 82nd Airborne Division, conducted the successful Grenada campaign, Operation Urgent Fury. After the Rangers secured a foothold on the first day, the 82nd Airborne Division airdropped to clear and secure the southern part of the island. "82nd Airborne's Urgent Fury," part two in SOF's Grenada series, begins on page 52. Photo: Alan Oxley  
**INSET:** Guatemalan army counterinsurgency unit uses firepower such as M79 grenade launcher to good effect. See "Peace Through Superior Firepower" on page 46 to learn how Guatemala is winning its guerrilla war. Photo: Gene Scroft



# COMMAND GUIDANCE

by Robert K. Brown

## Sanctions Promote Apartheid

**I**HATE TO SAY this, but sometimes we Americans can be pretty fuzzy headed when it comes to foreign affairs. Not just our government (usually fuzzy), but we as a people. We want to reach out and help others in trouble, but there are times when that "help" turns out to be more of a hurt.

South Africa is a prime example.

There's a current school of thought in some U.S. circles that economic sanctions levied against South Africa will immediately end the last vestiges of apartheid — South Africa's fading policy of separateness between blacks and whites.

The thinking goes like this: If we cut off trade with South Africa, the economic repercussions within that society will force the South African government to end white minority rule, thereby opening the door to majority rule, which will then allow us to reopen the trade doors.

As a theory, it has some appeal — on its surface — but it just won't work. In fact, sanctions will criminally hurt the very people they're designed to help — black South Africans.

If we cut off all trade with South Africa, just who do you think is going to get thrown out of work? Hundreds of thousands of blacks who, along with their families, depend on U.S. business for their livelihood and, indeed, their future.

With a stroke of the sanctions pen, we will have created a starving, homeless, segment of the South African population and deprived it of hope — and that creates a segment ripe for recruitment by violent revolutionaries who could eventually turn the country into another blood-drenched Uganda or Cambodia.

South Africa's government, under internal and international pressures, has been making strides toward eradicating apartheid. The process has been slow, and it hasn't satisfied many who demand overnight change. But that should surprise no one. Our own process of desegregation took more than 180 years, and it's still incomplete. Yet those changes are being made in South Africa, fueled by moderates, both black and white, who want to see their country survive its greatest challenge to date.

So what's our response to those moderates? With sanctions, we throw a chunk of the population out of work, drive them into the arms of revolutionaries, watch civil unrest and terrorism swell on a bloody wave, force the government to bow to the demands of its own intransigent right wing to "maintain law and order," and then cringe while fledgling civil liberties and an integrated social order are tossed into the maw of those who scream "Blacks and whites can never mix."

Is that what we really want for South Africa?

I'd rather look beyond the rhetoric of "apartheid" — on both sides — and go for what may be the most practical solution: black economic power.

Let's increase U.S. trade with South Africa and encourage U.S. businesses to set up shop. Let's put people to work, pay them a fair wage and give them the economic clout to make their their visions for the future of a coexistent and prosperous South Africa a reality.

That's helping. ✕

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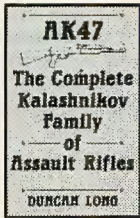


**SPECIAL FORCES COMBAT FIRING TECHNIQUES**

by Frank A. Moyer and Robert J. Scroggie



What happens when an American soldier fighting on foreign soil suddenly finds himself without that familiar U.S. Army rifle in his hands? If he can scrounge an enemy weapon, great, but his life depends on whether or not he knows how to shoot it. **Special Forces Combat Firing Techniques** provides that information. The Uzi submachine gun, British Bren light machine gun, Finnish Soumi submachine gun and Soviet AKM Assault Rifle are among more than 60 different American and foreign assault rifles, machine rifles, sub-machine guns, light machine guns and shoulder-stocked pistols tested in this study. The most effective positions, best response maneuvers, most accurate holding techniques and best kill-hit area, along with dozens of illustrative photographs, are presented in this comprehensive manual. 8½ x 11, hardcover, photos, 120 pp. **\$19.95**



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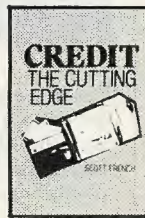
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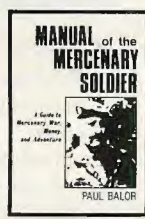
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## RULES TO RANGER BY...

F. Braun McAsh from Toronto, Canada, dropped us a copy of his own creation, *The Book of the Great Ranger*, and although space limitations preclude more than just a taste, here a few lines from his "O-Group of the Great Ranger":

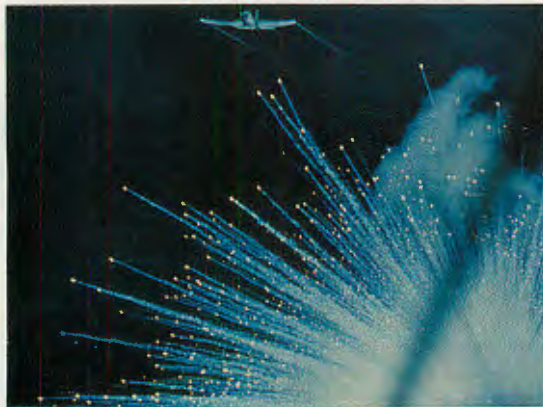
- Thou shalt not shoot to wound.
- Thou shalt not cast interrogates from a slick at 2,000 feet — if there's anyone looking.
- Thou shalt not refer to anything under 105mm as a "gun."
- Thou shalt always always remember that the term "officer and a gentleman" is a coincidental juxtaposition of two mutually incompatible words.
- Thou shalt pull out the holy pin . . .

We'd add: Thou shalt never say, "I'd like to tell you about my fifth 'Nam tour, but it's still classified"; or, "I was the last Marine they pulled off the embassy roof" if you weren't.

## MARCH OR DIE...

*As a reminder, Soldier of Fortune Magazine is not in the business of recruiting former military personnel for overseas work. In other words, we don't find jobs for mercs. But, if you're hot to trot, the French Foreign Legion still hires foreigners on initial five-year contracts. For current information on enlistment requirements, write S.I.H.L.E., B.P. 78, 13673 Aubagne, France. Replies take about three months.*

# BULLETIN BOARD



**There's no beauty in war, yet battle itself can often produce a photographic image that belies its brutality. In this U.S. Air Force photo, an A1E Skyraider blasts a Viet Cong position with a phosphorous bomb in February 1966.**

## SOVIET LEGACY...

Antipersonnel mines are perhaps the nastiest chapter in the 20th century book of counterinsurgency warfare. They're strewn nearly everywhere from Southeast Asia to southern Africa, and unfortunately (especially for the civilian population), combatants tend to leave them lying around even after the guns have fallen silent.

In Afghanistan, the same appears to be holding true.

Since 1979, Soviet occupation forces have scattered tens of thousands of AP mines around the countryside — many taking the insidious form of toys — although they have in the past and still do deny that fact. And, what's worse, they're not bothering to clean up their mess before the last Soviet soldier turns out the lights in Kabul.

So who gets hurt? Thousands of Afghan children, who have already lived the ravages of war during the last decade.

Afghanistan Resistance Relief Center (ARRC) has decided to do something about that. With Soviet invaders now withdrawing, the ARRC is raising funds to build a children's hospital inside the country to aid those kids who are victims of war wounds and diseases.

ARRC requests that if you're asked at your place of work to contribute to the United Way campaign, and if you wish to help the children of Afghanistan, write in the blank space of your United Way card: "Afghanistan Resistance Relief Center."

Or, if you simply want to make a tax-deductible contribution or find out more information, contact ARRC at P.O. Box 507, Annandale, Virginia 22003.



**As most vets who served in Vietnam will remember, there were moments — brief and few and far between — when the war on the ground seemed an eternity away. Here, a CH-3C glides over the South China Sea, providing one of those rare moments. Photo: U.S. Air Force**

## OLIVE ALERT...

Careful, martini drinkers. There may be more at stake than just your liver. According to the Intelligence Operations Center of the United States Customs Service:

"Information has been received that Middle Eastern terrorist organizations may be smuggling plastic explosives shaped like olives in five liter containers of real olives. The explosives are packed in olive oil, making detection difficult."

When we get down to mind-blowing substances, we'll stick to bourbon on the rocks, thanks.

## STINGING SKHADAFI...

Here's a bit of good news for the African country of Chad, long locked in conflict with its northern "neighbor," Libya. In what appears to be a policy shift in Washington, the Chadians will soon receive a Stinger surface-to-air missile package worth an estimated \$2 million, which breaks down into a reported 24 Stingers and seven launchers. Although Jonas Savimbi's UNITA forces in Angola have been receiving Stingers under a covert aid package, Uncle Sam's policy to date has been to keep the advanced system out of the hands of African governments.

*Continued on page 6*

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Remember Muammar's "Line of Death"? Well, looks like the same line will be drawn across Chadian air space — as Libya's pilots will soon find out.

## TOO BAD WE MISSED...

And since we're on the subject of Libya, here's a Reuters news clip taken from the 29 August *The Egyptian Gazette* which reads in part: "President Reagan went on trial in Libya today charged with trying to assassinate Libyan leader Muammar Khadaffi by bombing Tripoli and Benghazi in 1986. Reagan was not present as the court gave him 24 hours to send a defense lawyer, failing which it will appoint one. The Havana-based Anti-Imperialist Tribunal of America, founded in Nicaragua by left wing lawyers and activists from nine Latin American states in 1981, brought the case against Reagan."

Now, in the grander scheme of things, do you think anyone's really worried about this bit of nonsense? Neither are we, but it is a pity that we missed the bastard the first time around.

## SOURCING POW/MIA...

Are U.S. service personnel still being held against their will in Southeast Asia? What was it like for those who were captured by the Viet Cong or NVA? Who were the French soldiers who deserted and joined with the Viet Minh?

It might take weeks, or even months, to track down publications dealing with those questions, but now there's a one-stop source available which lists more than 130 books on the subject.

*POW/MIA — Indochina 1946-1986*, compiled by SOF associate Frank Brown, is "an annotated bibliography of non-fiction works dealing with prisoners of war/missing in action." This well-constructed piece of reference literature is definitely worth the postage-paid \$3 price tag, and you can get your copy by writing to F.C. Brown, Dept. SOF, Branch Clinic, Box 7, U.S. Naval Air Station, FPO San Francisco 96654.

## POW MEDAL...

We can't think of too many things worse than being taken prisoner of war, but it does happen and people survive the experience. Congress recently recognized that fact by authorizing the Prisoner of War Medal, issued at no cost to any person who was taken prisoner of war and held captive after 5 April 1917.

Basic requirements state that an individual must have been taken prisoner during an armed conflict — World War I, World War II, Korea or Vietnam — and must have rendered honorable service during the period of captivity. Posthumous awards are authorized to legal next of kin, although if a person is listed as missing in action without proof of captivity, the medal can't be claimed by NOK.

More information about the Prisoner of War Medal and requests

for application forms can be obtained by calling toll free 1-800-873-3768.

## VFW BASHES JANE...

We've been doing a bit of Jane Fonda bashing recently, and a few incoming letters have said something to the effect that, "Hey, the poor lady's already apologized on ABC's *20/20*, so why don't you leave her alone?"

Well, we sort of think her sincerity's in doubt and so, apparently, does the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

At their recent 89th annual convention, some 13,500 members passed a resolution stating in part: "... The VFW wants to be assured that the 'apology' is not simply a means of bolstering her sagging career and political fortunes." The membership also unanimously passed another resolution calling for Congress to put Hanoi Jane on trial for treason. And lest we forget Jane's memorable statement in 1969, in which she said we should pray to become communists, another VFW resolution asked whether her TV apology also meant she has disavowed her communist sympathies.

We think the VFW's resolutions have hit the nail on the head. When, Jane, are you going to answer for your actions during Vietnam?

## LOOKING FOR A FEW GOOD BOOTS...

Although as of this writing truce talks are underway between Ortega's Sandinistas and the Nicaraguan freedom fighters, we don't project an abrupt — and satisfactory — end of hostilities.

As a reminder, SOF's El Salvador/Nicaragua Defense Fund is still in business, forwarding much needed non-lethal military gear down south to the men and women who stand in freedom's front lines. Items they can use: combat boots and socks, green and jungle fatigues, BDUs and web gear. Do not send ammunition, weapons or explosives.

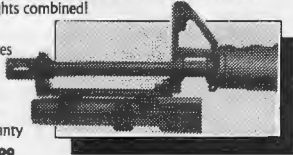
For more information, contact Colonel Alex McColl, our special projects director, at (303) 449-3750, or write to El Salvador/Nicaragua Defense Fund, P.O. Box 693, Boulder, CO 80306. Although you can't tax deduct it, monetary contributions are more than welcome too. ☒

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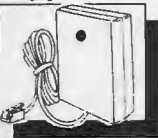
## ULTRA II



The size of a quarter, it is so sensitive it can pick up sounds 20' away and transmit them to any FM radio receiver (even the one in your car) up to several blocks away! Ultra II uses a four stage circuit and quality components to achieve maximum

performance. Uses 9 volt battery. Simple final assembly required. Intended for testing and experimentation; illegal to use for surveillance. Reg. \$195. Special \$149. Lithium 9 Volt Batteries \$15 ea. (Lasts 2-3 times longer)

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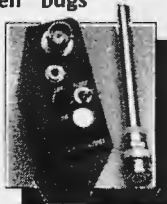


This unique device permits ONLY YOU to hear every sound in the building it is placed into. The Infinite Ear plugs into any modular phone jack or can be attached anywhere along the phone line. Simple to use, just dial the phone number and use the special pocket size, coded tone generator (included). Now you can listen into

your premises for as long as you like. Great peace of mind when you are away! The Infinite Ear with attachments and complete instructions. Reg. \$389. Special only \$249. ea.

## TRANSTEC Don't be trapped by hidden "bugs"

Transtec fits into your pocket and silently vibrates when it detects an R.F. transmitter (bug) in your presence, from up to 20' away! It warns you but doesn't tip off anyone else! When it gives a warning signal, Transtec can now be used with its special antenna attachment to verify that an actual "bug" is present (not an innocent signal) and then can be used to "sweep" and locate it. Transtec \$695.



## EVALUATOR

### New microprocessor checks for phone taps



Evaluator is based on new technology, never before available. Other "tap detectors" are only simple voltage meters, and they just won't pick up real taps. The Evaluator takes a fingerprint of the voltage, resistance and capacitance

of your individual phone line, stores it in memory, and then performs a check every minute, 24 hours a day and warns you with a flashing LED readout if conditions change.

Easy to use, sets up in minutes and monitors your line for "taps" or any other abnormal changes. \$695.

Must be installed on a "clean" line. See our CM-3 complete countermeasure package \$2,495.

Note: California, along with most other states, has expanded its wiretapping laws to allow local and state agencies to tap phones. This may compromise your privacy!

## TELEPHONE SCRAMBLERS



Fits over any phone. Secure conversations between two or more persons (each needs a scrambler). With over 13,000 access codes, all an eavesdropper will hear is "garbage." Quick and easy to use. Works on cellular, toll

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## AUDIO JAMMER



### Defeats room bugs!

Produces pseudo-random noise that will defeat all microphone-based eavesdropping devices.

Difficult to filter out and if properly used, all an eavesdropper will hear is a loud hiss.

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## BUG DETECTOR



Professional quality hand held transmitter ("BUG") detector uses state of the art L.E.D. readout to indicate the presence of an R.F. signal and will lead you to the source.

Also enables you to quickly determine if the signal is an actual bug by listening through the headphones (included).

Will detect room bugs, telephone transmitters, bumper beepers, etc. Instructions included. High quality!

DL-1000 Hand Held Detector \$695. (Ship/Insur. \$10.)

## WARNING

NOT TO BE USED FOR SURREPTITIOUS INTERCEPTION OF ORAL COMMUNICATIONS. ALL EQUIPMENT IS SOLD SUBJECT TO PUBLIC LAW 90-351, TITLE III, 18 U.S.C., SECTION 2511, ALL LOCAL, STATE AND FEDERAL ORDINANCES, RULES, REGULATIONS, ETC. IT IS THE SOLE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE BUYER (NOT THE SELLER) TO CONSULT LEGAL COUNSEL FOR INTERPRETATION OF ANY LAWS APPLICABLE TO THE AREA OF INTENDED USE.

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### SWORD CANE

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the lustrous hardwood shaft (sheathed) and the tri-foil sword (unsheathed). The sword is made of high-carbon steel; the shaft of finely turned beechwood. Overall length 36"; sword length from handle to tip, 32". Internal pin-in-channel mechanism locks/unlocks the sword. Made in France by that country's premier cane maker, and an absolute steal at \$148.00 postpaid.

## SEE THRU ENVELOPE SPRAY



Amazing chemical spray renders envelope temporarily transparent for 30 seconds then dries without a trace. Used to check suspected letterbombs for wires, batteries, etc.; inspect contents for contraband; quick scan "junk" mail. Odorless, leaves no markings or discoloration of envelope. An exceptional aid to arthritics. Warning: Not to be used on U.S. mail except by addressee; be certain of your rights. Each 6-oz. can \$15.00, additional cans \$10.00 each postpaid.

## SWORD UMBRELLA

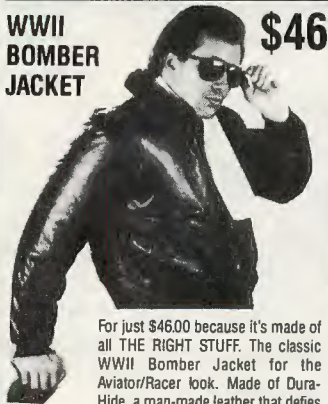


36" long with 27" sword inside metal shaft. Xtra large black umbrella, wooden handle. Sword releases with a quick turn of handle. \$130 postpaid.

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WWII  
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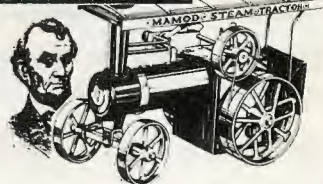
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Cleverly disguised as an ordinary desktop stereo speaker, this alarm actually has a powerful infrared sensor - with a whopping 60-foot by 60-foot range - built into the cabinet. Whenever an intruder steps into the 6X's scanning field, it emits the LOUDEST, PIERCING ALARM we've heard (louder and more annoying than even a smoke detector!). AND THE WHOLE UNIT IS POWERED BY SIX PEN LIGHT BATTERIES. This powerful protective alarm measures a small 7" x 4-1/2" x 8" and weighs under 3-lbs. Since it's battery operated, you can take it anywhere. And check out these additional features: 1) A security key switch is the ONLY way you can "arm" & "disarm" the unit; 2) a blinking light signals the alarm has sounded, or batteries are low; 3) entry and exit delay adjustable from 10 to 60 seconds; 4) automatic 2-minute reset timer; 5) versatility, thanks to a terminal strip with built-in ports to accept accessories such as AC adaptor, pressure sensitive mat, magnetic sensors for doors & windows, external horn for remote locations, etc. Ever since we introduced portable perimeter alarms, we've been looking for a SUPER unit, and THIS IS IT! The 6X Portable Electronic Perimeter Alarm has a one year warranty, looks great in its dark wood cabinet, and will absolutely BLOW YOU AWAY with its range and loud db alarm. Perfect for any security situation for the home, garage, shop, yard, work site, remote location, surveillance & military application - you name it. Order TODAY for just \$68.50 postpaid.

## BUG BOX

You Need The  
BUG BOX  
For Telephone  
Privacy



Assure complete telephone privacy with this telephone tap detector. It's the only device we know of that prevents same line eavesdropping PLUS notifies you of unauthorized intrusion onto your line. While most tap-detectors must screw onto your phone's mouthpiece, the BUG BOX is totally independent: plug your modular phone into tiny (3" x 2" x 1") BUG BOX, then plug BUG BOX into the wall jack. Now you've got TOTAL privacy - BUG BOX's indicator light lets you know if someone is eavesdropping AND if someone has intentionally (or unintentionally) tapped your lines inside our outside the house from the line feed. BONUS: Attach BUG BOX to every phone in your house, then you, AND ONLY YOU, can access the phone. BUG BOX not only tells you if someone else is on the line, it KEEPS THEM OFF with its Privacy Shut-out Circuit. THEY CAN'T LISTEN IN EVEN IF THEY WANTED TO! Buy one BUG BOX and use its indicator light to tell you if someone else has come "on line"; buy as many BUG BOX's as you have phones, and have it both ways - total Privacy Shut-out plus visible light indicators. We know of NO OTHER TAP DETECTOR THAT HAS BOTH THESE FEATURES! Order BUG BOX for \$48.00 postpaid, and each additional-unit for \$30.00 each.

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## DRUG TRADE IS TREASONOUS...

Sirs:

Your excellent Command Guidance column entitled "Death to Drugs" (SOF, August '88) prompted these supportive comments.

In my non-lawyer view, today's illicit drug dealers wage chemical warfare against the U.S. and each of our states. The U.S. Constitution says waging war against the United States, or aiding and abetting those who wage war against the United States is treason. State constitutions define treason in language which copies or paraphrases the U.S. Constitution. Thus, illicit drug traffic may be treason — per federal and state law.

The executive branch of government is responsible for law enforcement. Federal or state executive branch officers who fail to act appropriately against illicit drug traffic aid and abet that traffic, and commit treason. Although presidents and governors are tried by the appropriate legislative body after charges are brought by a designated committee of that body, treason is most often tried by a court after a grand jury indicts the suspect(s).

SOF might consider leading a national petition drive to demand that grand juries, Congress, and state legislatures act swiftly and positively against illicit drug traffic. Such a petition drive could not only halt much of today's criminal drug dealing, it might bring other far-reaching benefits to the nation.

Jim Ewart  
Zenger News  
Service  
Seattle,  
Washington



## FLAK



### ULYSSES GRANT SAYS: "WAR IS HELL"...

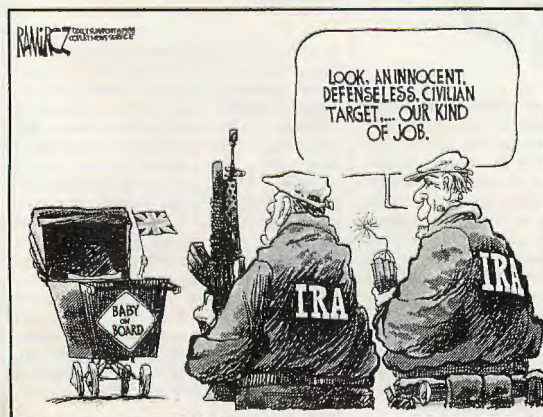
Sirs:

I know you folks are out there in high-up Colorado, where the air is thin and there ain't no such thing as a Yankee or a Confederate, but come on, let's give credit where credit is due. Page 54 of the August '88 issue ["The Tiger and the Donkey" sidebar] states in part that the "Tiger of Malay" was running across the Asian subcontinent like "Grant through Georgia." When I read this I heard a distinct "THUMP." It was poor old General Sherman turning over in his grave. Think of all those poor Georgians who for all these years have been blaming the wrong person for the mess made of their state in 1864. I realize it's a minor point, and Sherman probably wishes this credit belonged to Grant.

Keep up the good work. You're a very bright spot in the continuous barrage of B.S. generated here in D.C.

C.A. Thompson  
Manassas, Virginia

*That second "THUMP" you heard was a glib editor taking a minie ball between the eyes. You got me. All them Bluebellies always looked alike to me...*



## IRA? NO WAY!...

Sirs:

To use a crudity, Eric Kortz (FLAK, SOF August '88), is talking out of his asshole. Like many so-called Irish-Americans, he knows nothing about the situation in Northern Ireland. The bulk of the population time and again has voted overwhelmingly for continued union with the U.K.

There are some half-million Catholics in Northern Ireland, while the U.K. mainland has one million citizens of the Irish Republic living there. In other words, there are twice as many Irishmen who have left the Republic and chosen to live in the U.K. as live in all of Northern Ireland. That's the equivalent of 32 million Afghans choosing to live in the USSR!

As I type this letter I read in the morning's paper of the latest victims of the IRA. Two men, aged 60 and 64, were found with 150 (yes, 150) bullets pumped into them by four brave boyos for the crime of being building contractors for a police station.

Finally a few questions. The president of which country sent a note of sympathy to Nazi Germany after the death of Hitler? (The Irish Republic). Who first bombed Britain at the outset of World War II? (The IRA). Which country refuses to join NATO but has the largest facilities for the Soviet Airline "Aeroflot" outside the Iron Curtain? (The Irish Republic).

Anthony David Jones  
Lancashire, United Kingdom

*Mr. Kortz's short letter of support for the IRA drew a huge volume of FLAK. Suffice it to say that if he were a Ju-88, he would be littering the English landscape from Dover to Glasgow. However, some supported his views. Read on.*

Sirs:

Don't judge any organization without first looking at the reasons behind the group's formation.

A Muslim fanatic who hopes to achieve martyrdom by attacking a civilian airport in a country not directly involved with his people's oppression is a terrorist. There simply is no excuse.

However, an active service unit of a recognized paramilitary group which conducts operations against enemy troops occupying their country illegally should be considered freedom fighters doing a patriotic duty.

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In your reply, you listed IRA attacks but failed to mention British atrocities committed over the last 800 years. . . . not isolated incidents but repeated attempts at genocide by a supposedly "legitimate" government (aka parliament). The English government is the most wretched group of people ever assembled. They've been raping a nation for over 800 years, and the sooner they're stopped the better. As for the Provisionals being "leftists," there are leftists in most political organizations, including the English Parliament and the American Senate.

The Provisional Irish Republican Army has committed acts that many of you cannot accept. However, look at what history and the British people have done to Ireland. I hope their victory comes swiftly.

Spec. M. J. McMahon  
B Co., 1/506 Inf.  
U.S. Army

## CANADIANS WANT TO JOIN USMC...

Sirs:

I'm a Canadian interested in joining the United States Marine Corps. I am turning to you as the result of a problem that Canadians have in enlisting in any of the U.S. Armed Services. The problem is that because of the fact that Canada is considered a "foreign" country Canadians cannot easily enlist.

In order for a Canadian to join a U.S. armed service, he must get a work visa and then waste a year at some menial job before becoming eligible for enlistment. To become eligible as an officer one must spend five years working in the U.S.

I suspect that my problem is not unique. I thought that by bringing it to light it may come to the attention of your readership who, in turn, would mention this fact to their politicians.

A. Mapleleaf  
British Columbia, Canada

## TRAITOR JANE STILL COSTING SERVICE MEN...

Sirs:

I'm currently active duty Navy stationed in San Diego. One day very recently my vehicle was ticketed on base for having an offensive sticker. My bumper sticker read "Boycott Jane Fonda American Traitor Bitch." I appealed to the base traffic court about the citation and their problem was the word bitch. I was also told that this is not the type of behavior expected from

a Senior Petty Officer.

I returned to my unit and researched the word bitch for a suitable alternate. I was not amazed but delighted to find in Roget's Thesaurus that an alternate for the word bitch when referring to a woman is, you guessed it, Jane. With this information in hand, I again appealed the citation, but to no avail. Therefore I had to scrape my beloved bumper sticker. However it shall soon be replaced with one of General Guy Russo's "I'm not Fonda Hanoi Jane" stickers. This lesson has proven to me that we all must join the fight against the tyrants that wish to suppress us.

Mark S. Kmetz  
Spring Valley, California

## REWRITING HISTORY...

Sirs:

SOF politics is what creates governments like the ones in Nicaragua today, or in Angola. If the right wing in the United States had been half as concerned about freedom and democracy during the years of the Somoza dictatorship, the Sandinistas would not be in power today. Incidentally, Carter did not back the Sandinistas; he aided Somoza up to the last moment, and the aid which some people claim Carter sent to the Sandinistas was actually aid to the private sector, and tended to benefit the opponents of the FSLN.

With this in mind, it can even be said that SOF politics are the best assistance the Marxists could possibly receive, since those politics reinforce the notion that the United States is against social change, while the Soviets will back it. If I were head of the KGB, I would see to it that SOF received large sums of money and the best advice I could provide. With friends like the Somozas . . . we don't need enemies.

James White  
Windham, Connecticut

*Wow! Where to start. In general, the right wing probably did prefer Somoza's regime on the oft quoted recommendation of Harry Truman that "He (Somoza) is an SOB but he's our SOB." Some Nicaraguans have learned that lesson as well. The contra army is the single largest guerrilla insurgency in the Western hemisphere today and as much as anything that is a result of the FSLN's mismanagement of Nicaragua's economy and their*

*hobnailing of human and civil rights. While Somoza was a dictator par excellence, he tended toward selective repression, while the current dictators in Managua are so vicious in their pursuit of totalitarianism that even bona fide FSLN war heroes like Eden "Commandante Zero" Pastora took up arms as contras.*

*We know of no evidence whatsoever to support the contention that President Carter supported Somoza. Carter did make futile attempts to save the democratic system in Nicaragua, to ensure that the moderates had some role in the post-Somoza government and that the National Guard would continue to exist. But the Carter administration cut off all aid, economic and military, to Nicaragua in early 1979, and diplomatic pressure put on Israel by the Carter Administration in May of that year turned back in mid-ocean a freighter carrying desperately needed ammunition. Carter's ambassador Lawrence Pezzullo even demanded Somoza's resignation and at one point tried to barter with the FSLN for a more moderate post-Somoza government. In September 1979, Carter asked for \$75 million in aid for Nicaragua — including \$25 million for training Sandinista soldiers — and the aid bill passed in June 1980.*

*By then the FSLN — according to Pastora and other FSLN leaders who have broken with the movement — had already taken the country into the Soviet camp. The FSLN increased censorship, armed communist guerrillas in El Salvador, recruited would-be guerrillas in Honduras for training in Cuba, prohibited political opposition rallies, repressed Indians and Black Creoles on the Atlantic coast and murdered labor leaders throughout Nicaragua.*

*The contras and the current war in Nicaragua were a result of the FSLN actions in 1980.*

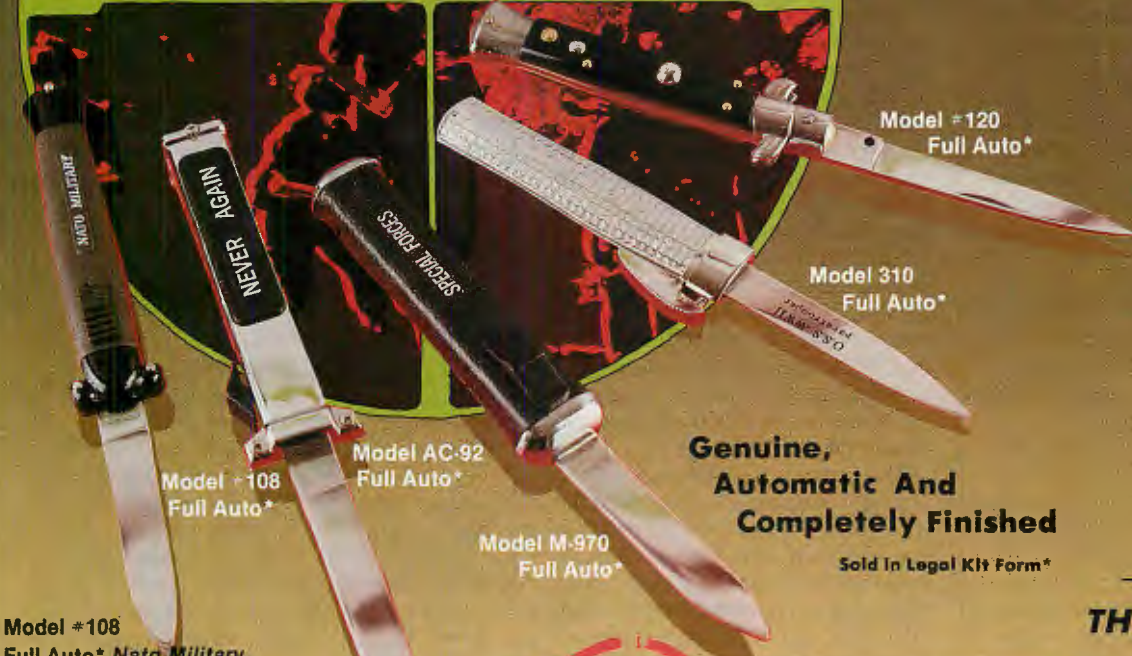
*SOF wishes you luck in your desire to head the KGB and anticipates happy days if Gorby gives you the job.*

## LETTERS

**Your input has made FLAK one of SOF's most popular columns. Write and tell us your opinion of SOF or any subject you consider worth our readers' attention. We reserve the right to edit for content and brevity. Send letters to FLAK, c/o SOF, PO Box 693, Boulder, CO 80306. ✉**

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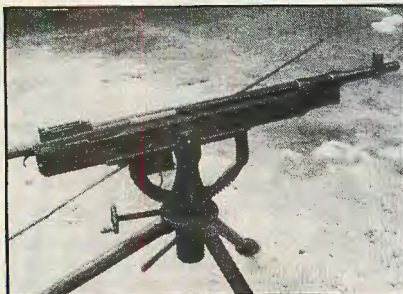


**S**INCE the mid-19th century, every merchant of death from the infamous Sir Basil Zaharoff to Du Pont has peddled his wares in every Spanish-speaking fiefdom on the North and South American continents. It's been a lucrative 150 years, as most Latin military potentates have always preferred fusiles (rifles) to frijoles (beans). Hundreds of thousands of Mauser bolt-action rifles have been emblazoned with every crest from Chile to Mexico.

El Salvador is no exception, and I recently examined an assemblage of esoteric machine guns that would put any rattle gun collector or historian into a cold sweat. Rusting away in a musty storage room of the *Museo Nacional* in San Salvador lies a most intriguing pile of small arms history. Unfortunately, all of their reciprocating components have been removed to preclude use by the communist terrorists who plague that tortured nation.

First to catch my attention was an impressive Italian aircraft machine gun marked "MITRAGLIATRICE ISOTTA FRASCHINI, chiusura Brevetto Scotti, CAL. 7.7, No. 0158, Milano - 1938 XVI." Set in a wing-gun mount, complete with two hydraulic buffers, the Italian Scotti, which was made in calibers ranging from 6.5mm to 12.7mm, fires from the open-bolt position and operates by means of delayed blowback with gas assist. Its rotating bolt head is actuated by a gas piston. When the bullet passes the barrel's gas port, a carefully metered amount of gas, which is used for unlocking only, is bled into a cylinder that houses the piston. Unlocking requires little energy, as the bolt's locking lugs are inclined at a 60-degree angle. Scotti-designed machine guns were mainly produced by the Isotta-Fraschini Company and were only used to a limited extent by the Italian Air Force throughout World War II. In the Italian manner, cartridge cases are lubricated prior

**Colt "potato digger" was a John Moses Browning invention. Its odd loading lever swept such a wide arc under the barrel that it precluded firing from the prone position. Sensitive to dust and overly complex, it was subject to frequent stoppages and mediocre accuracy.**



## FULL AUTO

Text & Photos by Peter G. Kokalis

# Ghosts of Gunrunners Past

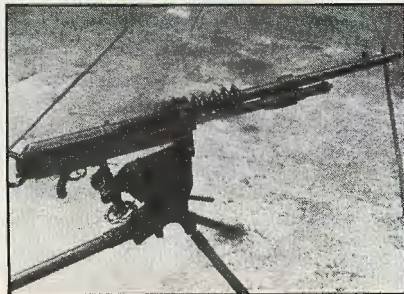
to chambering. This is an abomination on a battlefield device, as it serves only to sludge up the system in high dust environments. No revolutionary design features here, and a marginally reliable weapon.

Far more interesting was the Darne aircraft machine gun, represented by a specimen marked "DARNE 1926, T.1551 G., cal. 7mm". Invented by Regis Darne and his son, Pierre, it was introduced during World War I and manufactured in great secrecy. After the war, it was issued to French units in Africa and sold to several Balkan countries. In 1932, it passed a rigorous cold weather test at an altitude of 25,000 feet above sea level and a temperature of zero degrees Fahrenheit.

The Darne is gas operated, with no regulator and a very short recoil stroke. It can be fed (from the right or left by rearrangement of its feed mechanism) by either cloth belts or metallic strips. The aviation model had an abnormally high cyclic rate (1,700 rpm, which is a desirable feature for this application) and a synchronizing device to control firing through an aircraft propeller.

The gas piston itself raises the rear section of the bolt into a recess in the receiver to accomplish locking. After the bolt has been raised into battery, the piston, which holds the firing pin, continues forward until the firing pin protrudes through the opening in the bolt face to strike the primer. During the recoil cycle, a cam on the piston

**Hotchkiss Model 1914 was an ugly war-horse of unquestioned reliability. It can be instantly recognized by the five large radial cooling fins over the chamber end of the barrel. Its only drawback was its method of feed: 24- or 30-round metallic trays.**



contacts the bolt and drives it downward, out of its locking recess.

The Darne's feed mechanism is quite unusual. Two claws on the gas piston withdraw the incoming cartridge from the feedway after it has been pushed from its link by an odd device that drives the round smartly rearward by pushing with great force on the bullet's nose. All the important feed functions occur during the piston's recoil stroke, when there is a surplus of energy. There is little chance for a short cycle in this system.

Marketed at the attractive price of only \$28, 11,000 were sold between 1918 and 1931 — the majority being manufactured by Unceta in Spain. Cheaply made on outmoded machinery and crudely finished, the Darne was a reliable design, but as manufactured, not a durable weapon.

Most of the machine guns in the museum's collection are infantry ground-types. There is the usual assortment of Lewis Guns, Maxims, Vickers guns, ZB26s and even a Colt-Browning MG-40 (export version of the Aircraft AN-M2 flexible with spade grips).

Interesting, but not exceptionally rare, is an unusually excellent specimen of the Colt Model 1895 in caliber 7x57mm, complete with its original tripod. Invented by John Moses Browning, its peculiar gas piston is attached to the end of the loading lever, which rotates downward and away from the gun with each round, earning it the sobri-

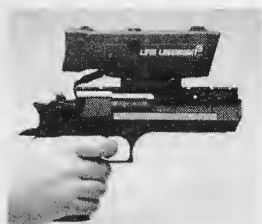
**Swiss Model KE7 LMG was purchased in quantity only by China. Developed during the late 1930s, it was recoil-operated and weighed only 17¼ pounds, but was uncontrollable in burst fire and bottom fed by a magazine of only 20-round capacity.**



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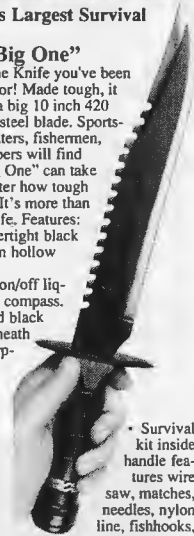
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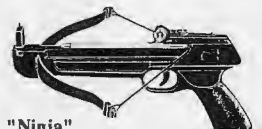
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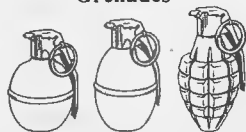
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quiet, "potato digger." Air-cooled with distinctive radial cooling fins around the barrel and featuring a simple feed mechanism, it was the world's first successful gas-operated machine gun.

Browning's Model 1895 was an ingenious and compact design, but because of the wide arc of its gas-actuated loading lever it could not be fired from the prone position. Furthermore, it was debris-sensitive and subject to continual stoppages, contained too many parts and springs and was capable of only mediocre accuracy as consequence of excessive barrel vibration. Colt manufactured no more than 1,500 during World War I before it was completely replaced by the vastly superior re-

coil-operated M1917 water-cooled machine gun (another Browning design).

Historically more significant, the Hotchkiss Model 1914 machine gun I examined was complete with its Affut-Trepied Modele 1916 mount and was chambered for the 7x57mm cartridge. Competing with the Browning and Maxim recoil-operated systems, it was the first *reliable* gas-operated machine gun to hit the arms market. Invented by a Czech inventor named Odkolek, the design was purchased by Hotchkiss & Cie and refined by the American, Laurence Benet. It first appeared in 1895 and was adopted by the French Army in 1897.

Its gas-operated mechanism was locked by a pivoting flap which secured the bolt to the barrel until gas pressure drove the reciprocating parts rearward. This ugly beast was air-cooled and employed five large radial cooling fins at the chamber end of the barrel. The Model 1914 was no more than a slightly modified version of the original Model 1897. Its principal drawback was the method of feed, which was either 24- or 30-round metallic strips or 249-round articulated belts composed of three-round hinged metallic strips.

Although heavy (52 pounds, empty), the Hotchkiss was undeniably reliable. In the spring of 1916, during the defense of Verdun, a pair of Hotchkiss machine guns held their position for 10 days and nights and fired a total of more than 150,000 rounds of ammunition.

An even more unusual variant of the Hotchkiss system that I discovered at the museum was the rare Modele 1924 Light Machine Gun, lacking only its bipod and flash suppressor. This specimen was also chambered for the 7x57mm round. Developed in 1892, the 7x57mm cartridge owes its popularity in Latin America to its adoption by the Spanish army in the Model 1893 Mauser bolt-action rifle.

Gas operated and locked by the usual Hotchkiss tilting flap, the Modele 1924 LMG incorporated a rate-reducing mechanism in a housing in front of the trigger and weighed only 21 pounds empty. Although some were made for use with top-mounted box magazines, this one was designed for the standard Hotchkiss metallic strip. Never a success, 5,000 were acquired by the Greek army in 6.5mm. The only recorded 7x57mm examples were purchased by Brazil and the Dominican Republic.

Even less successful a venture was the Swiss SIG Maschinengewehr Modell KE7 LMG. With the receiver marked "Societe Industrielle Suisse Neuhausen," this one was missing its buttstock monopod and bottom-fed magazine, but was again chambered for the 7x57mm cartridge. Designed by the Swiss Ende and Hungarian Kiraly during the late 1930s, the KE7 was an attempt to manufacture an LMG at a reasonable price. Never adopted by the Swiss Army, it was purchased in quantity only by China.

Recoil operated and firing from the open-bolt position, it weighed only 17¼ pounds and was no easier to control in burst fire than was the Johnson M1941 LMG, which used the same operating principle. As it was bottom fed, the magazine held only 20 rounds — the same defect that limited the



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Continued on page 93

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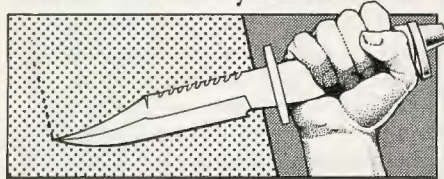
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**ENTER THE DRAGON.** China's Undeclared War Against the U.S. in Korea, 1950-1951. By Russell Spurr. Newmarket Press, Dept. SOF, 18 East 48th St., New York, NY. 10017. Hardcover. \$22.95. Review by Jim Graves.

**S**PURR'S remarkable book concept — to write a history of the Korean war from the Chinese side — is brilliantly executed thanks to the current friendly climate between the United States and China. With China open, Spurr was able to locate enough Chinese generals, officers and privates to write a book every serious student of the Korean war should buy.

He tells the story through the remembrances of Captain Lao Kongcheng, (commander of a hit-and-run platoon, known as the Sharp Swords), Colonel Yang Shxian (a battalion commander with the 39th Field Army), Jia Peixing (an 18-year-old runner with the 40th), Colonel Wong Lichan (a military adviser with the North Koreans) and General Peng Dehuai (commander of the Chinese Peoples' Volunteers in Korea).

He begins by debunking commonly held perceptions about China's role in the Korean War.

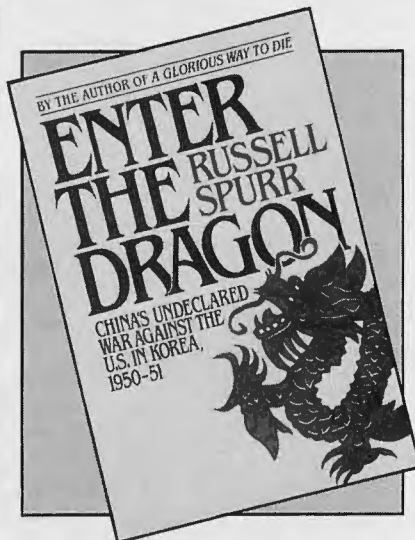
One, the Chinese had no idea the North Koreans were going to invade the south. They considered Korea to be in the Soviet sphere of influence, and neither the Soviets nor the North Koreans bothered to give them advance warning. When the North Korean invasion kicked off, the only Chinese military attache in Korea was Colonel Lichan. The generally accepted version in the West is that China, the Soviet Union and North Korea acted in concert. Spurr argues convincingly that this was not the case at all.

Two, Mao Zedong was the principal force behind China's decision to intervene. Spurr implies that Mao's decision was based on the need to find something for his 5.2 million-man army to do. Mao appears to have been seriously concerned about the impact released soldiers, especially the 2.5 million Nationalist prisoners who had been absorbed into the PLA, would have on the Chinese economy. A certain amount of hubris and reasonable fears about the survival of what he perceived to be an important buffer state (albeit a Soviet client) when General Douglas MacArthur's forces started closing in on China's Yalu River border, also appear to have played a role in Mao's decision to enter the war.

Three, General Peng Dehuai, the Chinese commander, and his peers were less than ecstatic about Mao's decision to go into Korea. General Peng felt the Chinese army was too

poorly supplied with modern arms, ammunition, armor, artillery, aircraft and vehicles to drive the United States completely out of Korea. He correctly foresaw that as the Chinese drove south from the Yalu they would eventually become incapable of sustaining an offensive — just as General MacArthur became incapable of sustaining his drive to the Yalu.

What General Peng did have was people — six Chinese field armies of 30,000 infantry each were available for the first strike — so he decided to hit the Americans in overwhelming strength to blunt their drive to the Yalu and then back off in hopes the Americans would get the message and stay away from China's border. They did not.



Peng's divisions began moving south on 14 October. South Korean (ROK) forces took the first Chinese prisoner on 25 October, and by the 29th they had 10 more. Military intelligence in Tokyo discounted the possibility the Chinese had entered Korea in force even when the prisoner count reached 55, and the captives claimed they were assigned to no fewer than six separate Chinese armies.

On 1 November, two Chinese field armies (60,000 men) smashed through ROK forces east of Unsan. The entire 39th Field Army — with bugles blowing, whistles trilling and gongs banging, causing one GI to gasp, "My God, it's a Chinese funeral" — struck and destroyed the 8th Regiment of the 1st Cavalry. By 5 November units of the U.S. 8th Army throughout North Korea were under attack. But on 6 November, Peng's divisions broke off the attacks and faded back

into the hills. That persuaded U.S. military intelligence in Tokyo — now convinced there really were Chinese soldiers in Korea — that the 8th Army in the northwest and the U.S. X Corps on the east coast could drive the Chinese back.

Peng's soldiers — reinforced with an additional 120,000 infantry — came out of the mountains on 25 November, and smashed ROK and U.S. Army forces in the northwest, triggering "The Great Bug Out," the ensuing 275-mile retreat of the 8th Army from the Yalu to south of Seoul. Across the central spine of mountains that effectively divided Korea into two theaters, Dehuai's 120,000-man 9th Army — at horrible cost — drove the independently commanded U.S. X Corps back from the Chosin Reservoir to its ships.

Peng's losses to the Marines in the east — 40,000 killed in combat or frozen to death and the remaining 80,000 in too poor a condition for future offensive operations — led to a stormy conference in Peking between Dehuai and Mao Zedong. Dehuai literally stormed in from the Korean front, dragged Mao out of bed and demanded Mao get the Soviets off their backsides and supply his armies with equipment, clothing and logistics. Peng's soldiers were inadequately clothed — some were in tropical uniforms — and all had canvas footwear. Arms were often outdated World War II junk taken from the Japanese, and ammunition was scarce. Food was almost nonexistent.

Soviet supplies did eventually reach Peng's forces, but way too late. General Matthew B. Ridgeway halted Peng's offensive just south of Seoul by January 1951, and the war turned into a stalemate.

As innovative as Spurr's recounting of the Chinese perception of the strategy of the Korean war is, it is at the soldier level that his book becomes fascinating.

The average Chinese soldier appears to have been not much different than his American counterpart. Staying dry and warm, getting some sleep and something to eat were the priorities. A hot bath was a sybaritic luxury. And utter befuddlement was the frequent outcome when Chinese troops came into contact with Americans.

The Chinese saw the Americans as too road-bound but envied their weapons, vehicles, massive firepower and aircraft. As for food, Captain Lao's political officer, dividing up captured



## IN REVIEW

*Continued on page 93*

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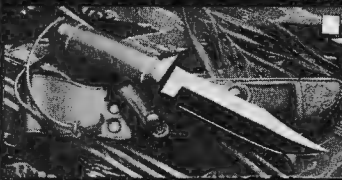


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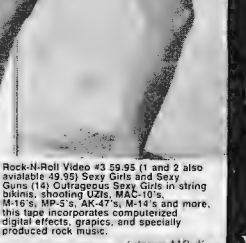
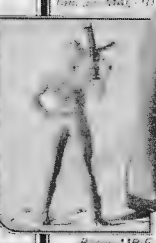
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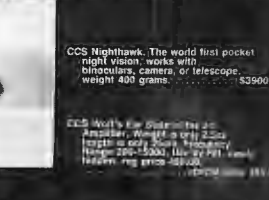
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"No man, no way. I'm too short. And besides that, I'm current for jump pay until I'm discharged."

Sadistic pleasure flows through my body. "Go look for yourself, dead man. The Army is going to discharge you in a box."

Souden carefully sets both boots under his bunk and runs downstairs. Soon loud shouting filters up. "You will too jump, you skinny little turd, or we'll court-martial you, and you can spend the rest of your pathetic life on Fort Bragg! Now get out of my orderly room!"

Souden returns and glares at me as he sits on his footlocker. He's really pissed. "Hey man," I say as I smile at him, "I didn't put your name on the manifest."

Next morning at reveille, First Sergeant Karns addresses morning formation of Company C. "If your name is posted on the jump manifest, you will fall out at ten hundred hours with full field gear and weapons." A voice behind me says, "Shit, man, I thought this would be a Hollywood jump." Another voice says, "You heard the man. Full field gear with weapons."

Karns continues. "After chow, men on the manifest will assemble in the day room for a jump briefing by Captain Munn. Fall out."

Somehow, greasy eggs didn't slide down too easily on jump day. Coffee tasted good though, and I managed to wash everything down.

The day room was crowded and noisy as Captain Munn entered. We all came to attention before the command was given, because Captain Munn had



# I WAS THERE

by Al Starnier

## Jumps, Bumps and Spaghetti Lumps

that effect on his troops. Captain Munn was well over six feet tall, brilliant, and one of few black officers in the 82nd Airborne Division.

I looked around at the other jumpers and decided that they would probably jump into hell for this man, maybe even into Texas. We soon had the salient facts about the parachute drop that we would make that afternoon.

At or around 0200 we would make a simulated air assault on Sicily Drop Zone. We would be jumping from C-123 aircraft. After landing, we would assemble in our respective combat units and attack a fortified enemy position. Captain Munn finished the briefing, and we "snapped to" as he left.

---

**The C-119 is a real vomit comet, with a ride something like a drunk camel with one leg missing.**

---

A strong breeze greeted us as we climbed from our trucks at Pope Air Force Base. After a prescribed amount of milling around, we lined up in "sticks" of jumpers. As we shifted to the truck to draw our parachutes, religion started to reenter my life. Those little prayers that are rarely used start to flicker through that little spiritual circuit that most parachutists have developed.

"Oh God, please let this be a good chute. Oh God, let it be packed right. Oh God, etc. . . ."

A red-capped nigger throws a main and a reserve chute on the tailgate, and I stagger away with my load of equipment. As I lay the chutes on my gear I'm amazed at the impressive size of this pile.

Let's see. There is a fully loaded combat pack with horseshoe roll (tent and blanket), fully equipped pistol belt

and webbing with canteen, bayonet, compass, first aid kit, entrenching tool, rifle grenade launcher, gas mask, poncho, weapon container, M-1 rifle, two parachutes and an aviator kit bag. What a pile of crap.

I park myself on the ground, and I notice that the strong breeze has increased to a real wind. I look at Souden, and he is looking real gray, kind of like a T-shirt that has been worn for a couple of weeks in a motor pool. Someone has chalked a skull and crossbones on his helmet along with the words "Last Blast."

"Hey Souden," Cooley says, "when you cream in, I'll come over and kick a little sand over you." Souden gives him a one finger salute and continues to adjust his helmet liner, which he has been adjusting since his first helmet was issued to him nearly three years ago. I guess he still thinks that steel pot can somehow be made comfortable. What a dreamer.

Our company supply jeep rolls up, and Clark, the driver, yells, "C-rations for any of you guys that want them." He only gets two takers. One is a new trooper, fresh out of jump school, who hasn't learned about riding in low-flying troop transports with a full stomach. The other is Giffs, a garbage gut who will eat anything, anywhere, anytime. Clark also hands out several rolls of cord that we will use to secure loose equipment.

As the jeep rolls away, I hear sounds of large aircraft engines starting up across this airfield. Our platoon sergeant, who is also jumpmaster, shouts, "Get it on." I grab my T-10 parachute, throw it over my shoulders and start the rather complicated process of strapping on the rest of my combat gear. I notice a further tightening of my sphincter muscle as a gust of wind ripples the grass along the runway.

As I assist Souden with his tiedowns and chinstrap, I notice a green tinge to his complexion. C-123 aircraft are now rolling down the taxiway toward us. I'm sure glad they aren't C-119s; the C-119 is a real vomit comet, with a ride something like a drunk camel with one

# STUN GUNS

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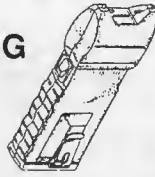
## ZAPPER STUN GUN



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#A007.....\$49.95

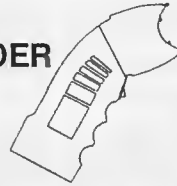
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This unique stun gun is similar to our regular Zapper in a most enlightening way. In addition to the stopping power, it also delivers a burst of high intensity light directly into the attacker's eyes. Chances are that his optic nerve will be so overdosed with excess light energy that he will not be able to see you let alone continue the attack. If he does, the "Lightning Zapper" delivers its painful bite, leaving him dazed and confused. 7 inches long.

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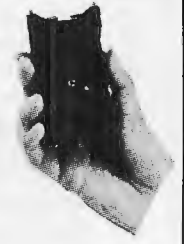
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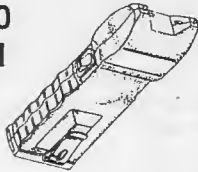
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leg missing. Years later, I still feel a twinge of nausea when I see a C-119 Flying Boxcar.

As the planes park abreast of us and drop their tailgates, we line up for jumpmaster's inspection. I step up to the sergeant, and he tells me that I will be stickpusher for this jump. Stickpusher is last man in each line of jumpers to leave the aircraft, and he assures a rapid unloading of the plane by putting his shoulder against the back of the line of men and pushing like hell. This is especially important when jumping into short drop zones, because jump aircraft must be unloaded in one pass to avoid ground fire.

I waddle up the tailgate ramp of the aircraft, work my way forward of the cargo bay and settle into a nylon sling that passes for a seat on an Air Force transport plane.

As troops crowd into the aircraft, I notice the interior is padded with insulation—a padded cell. We are in the right place. I look around and notice that "Last Blast" Souden is sitting next to me. I become even more uneasy when I note that "new trooper" is sitting directly across from Souden and is still chewing on a last mouthful of C-rat spaghetti lumps.

The aircraft commander steps out to deliver his briefing. He mentions that sickbags are available should any of us

feel nausea during flight. I guess nobody told him that we all started feeling nausea as soon as we saw our names on the bulletin board.

He goes back into his little room, and soon the engines start. As we begin to taxi toward the runway, I check to make sure that I am carrying my crucifix. I'm not very religious, but I figure that if my chute doesn't open this little cross might prevent me from continuing downward after I collide with ground zero. I gaze around at the load of soldiers, and I'm amazed at how many of them are asleep. There is some nervous reaction to putting on a parachute that causes most people to go to sleep.

We taxi into takeoff position, and engine noise and vibration are raised to almost glass-shattering levels. Brakes are released, and we hurdle forward, hopefully for a takeoff. We finally leave the ground, landing gear thumps into place and I'm able to twist around in my seat and see that we are turning to join two other aircraft for our jump formation.

Already our flight is getting bumpy, as usual, and I see that the rookie is learning about greasy C-rations and flying. I compare his shade of green with Souden's and decide the new trooper is ahead. I also notice with alarm that I am within range of both of them.

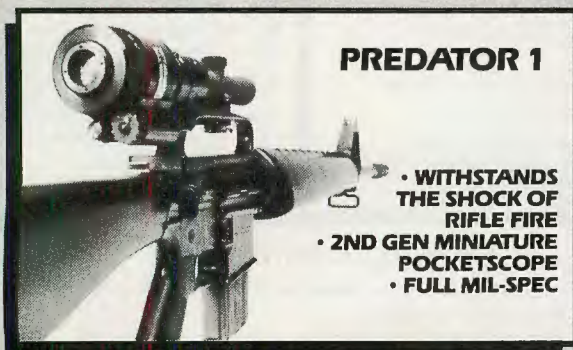
I close my eyes and start drifting off to a pastoral scene with cool grass and a quiet stream. Suddenly the dream changes. Cool grass turns to brown lumpy stuff, and the stream becomes a sewer. Suddenly my nostrils jerk my eyes open. This odor isn't a dream. I quickly scan the faces in the lines of men and note a satisfied grin on Gibbs, the garbage gut. Gibbs' gas is filling the cabin, and he's actually smiling. I devoutly hope the riggers have issued a bag of dirty laundry to him instead of a parachute.

I quickly look at "new trooper" as his cheeks are starting to bulge. I try to edge away from him, but am trapped by all my equipment and can't move. Souden is too far gone to notice any danger, and he isn't in much better shape in the nausea department. I finger my crucifix and pray for deliverance from this vomitorium.

"Oh God, please turn their faces away from me and give me peace. Amen."

It didn't work. My line to God was busy, and they erupt almost simultaneously. I cover my face and turn away from what is becoming a contest. As I peek back, I am amazed at seeing partially digested spaghetti and C-ration chocolate hitting above

*Continued on page 91*



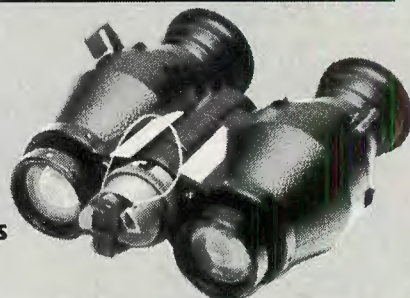
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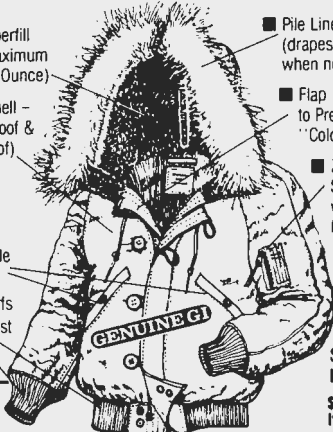
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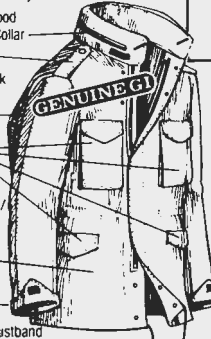
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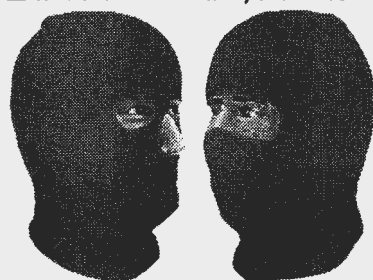
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- Maroon #H-430
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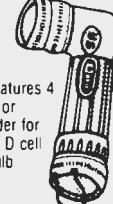
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- Knit Face Mask  
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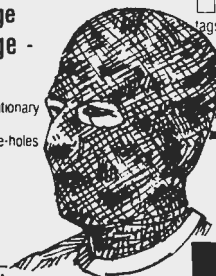
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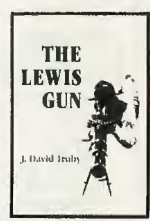
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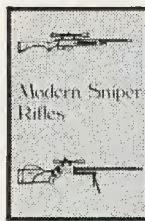
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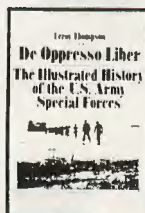
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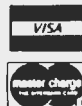
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# COMBAT WEAPONCRAFT

Text & Art by Stan Martin

## Crisis Entries

Proper entry techniques will determine success or failure. Here, an HRU prepares to make a team entry.



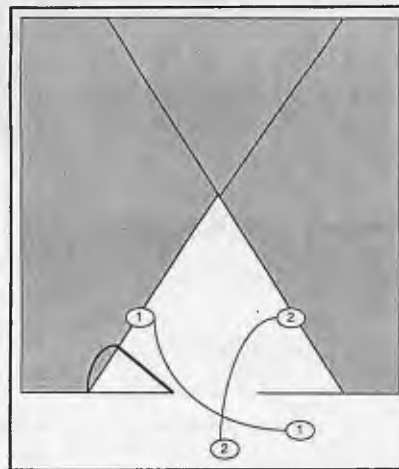
**T**WO men, toting suppressed MP5s and clad in the black uniform of the local police department SWAT team, slipped quietly up to the front door of the single story house. On the other side of the door was waiting a man who had already killed once. For the past six hours he had been threatening to kill his two remaining hostages. The time for negotiation had ended, and the SWAT team was now in position, the men at the front door the last to be put in place before making entry. Crouched on either side of the door, the men waited for the order to go in. Their radios broke static, and the code word came. One man quickly stepped away from the wall, raised his foot and kicked the door open. And then all hell broke loose.

*Crisis Entries.* They're made every day by policemen and hostage rescue units (HRUs) all over the world. While the movies and media highlight the missions of military elite HRUs and police SWAT teams, most crisis entries are made by the beat officer forced into a hostile situation with little advance notice, sometimes when performing 'routine' duties, such as serving arrest or search warrants. Crisis entries (used here to mean any entry into a known hostile or potentially hostile situation) must be conducted quickly, aggressively and by team members who thoroughly understand their duties once inside the door. A poorly planned or executed entry can turn disastrous in a heartbeat, jeopardizing the lives of team members, hostages and even suspects.

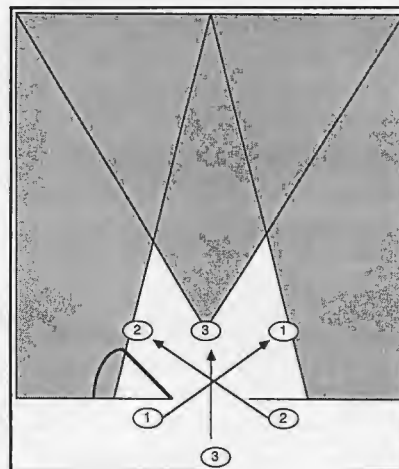
The three most commonly used entries are the two-man, three-man and team (multi-member) entry. Besides the number of men involved, the only basic difference is the individual mem-

### FIELD OPERATOR

Stan Martin is currently assigned to a major metropolitan police department and works in Field Operations. He has also served as a U.S. Army infantryman, and holds a degree in International Relations.



Number 1 and Number 2 cross, after Number 2 kicks door. Note that the areas of responsibility overlap and that neither man is backlit by doorway.



Number 1 goes in first, followed by Number 2 and Number 3. Swift execution can mean success instead of failure.

ber's area of responsibility once entry is made.

Although circumstances may not allow time for planning (an example would be hot pursuit of a suspect into a house), when time is available prior to the serving of a warrant or entry into a hostage/barricade situation, the fullest attention to detail should be given during the pre-raid planning. Most departments have Raid Sheets, which outline all the aspects of the raid to be covered prior to and after entry. If a raid sheet is not available, the most logical place to begin your intelligence gathering is the building into which entry will be made. All personnel involved should know the layout of the building, the location of the doors and windows, and any potential hiding places for the suspect. Often it will be possible to find a building in the area with the same floor plan,

which can be used to familiarize the team. Your agency should keep a file of previously raided buildings and their floor plans, so they will be available to teams making entry in the future. Obviously, people who live or work in or near the building to be assaulted can also provide valuable intelligence.

The next area of concern is the suspects themselves. How many people do you expect to find inside, and how many will be hostile toward you? What type of weapons, explosives or other obstacles (i.e., dogs, alarms, barred doors or windows) might you encounter? In which rooms do you expect the suspects, hostages or evidence to be? Answers to these questions will help you decide how many men to use, at which locations entry will be made, what weapons and secondary equipment will be carried, and what tactics you will employ once inside.

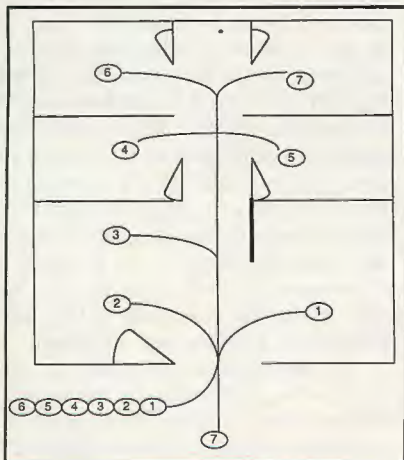
A third area of attention is the entry party. Each man must be able to read back his individual duties and should also know what to do if a team member is hit or some other contingency arises.

A two-man entry does not necessarily mean only two men will be making entry into an entire building. It refers to *two men* making entry as a *team*. When assaulting a large building, several points of entry may be used with a variable number of men at each point.

In a two-man entry, the team approaches the door via a route which will prevent them from being seen by anyone inside. One man is positioned on either side of the door. We will refer to them as the "hinge-side" man and the "knob-side" man. The man on the side of the door with hinges will be the first man through the doorway. On command, or when everyone is in position and ready to go, the knob-side

*Continued on page 90*

**In a team entry, men enter in line, and each man peels off in order to secure his area of responsibility.**





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# PRACTICALLY LETHAL

by Chuck Karwan

ANY discussion of combat knives should include the many different types of knives used by military personnel. There are bayonets, machetes, parachute knives, utility folders, "fighting knives" and others. What I'll discuss here are the categories or types of combat knives, their characteristics, and their relative strengths and weaknesses.

I use the term *combat knife* to include those knives carried by military personnel which combine the functions of a weapon and a tool. Sometimes also called "fighting knives" or "field knives," the military combat knife has three basic functions: as a silent killing weapon, as an emergency weapon, and as a tool. It is to a large degree

## PRACTICAL ANALYSIS

Chuck Karwan's comments on combat knives represent the carefully formed views of a user. Karwan served in Vietnam with the 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile), 5th Infantry Division (Mechanized) and the 10th and 5th Special Forces Groups. Author of more than 100 articles, Karwan is a monthly columnist for *Gun World* and *Shooting Industry* magazines, and a frequent contributor to SOF. He is a graduate of West Point, Ranger School, Panama's JOTC, airborne and jumpmaster school, and the Special Forces Officer's Course.

## Grunt's Guide to Combat Knives



The U.S. Army Mark I trench knife of World War I was the first true dagger-type combat knife issued to U.S. forces. It featured a sharp, pointed, double-edged blade and integral brass knuckles — an atypical but useful feature for fighting in the trenches. Photo: Chuck Karwan

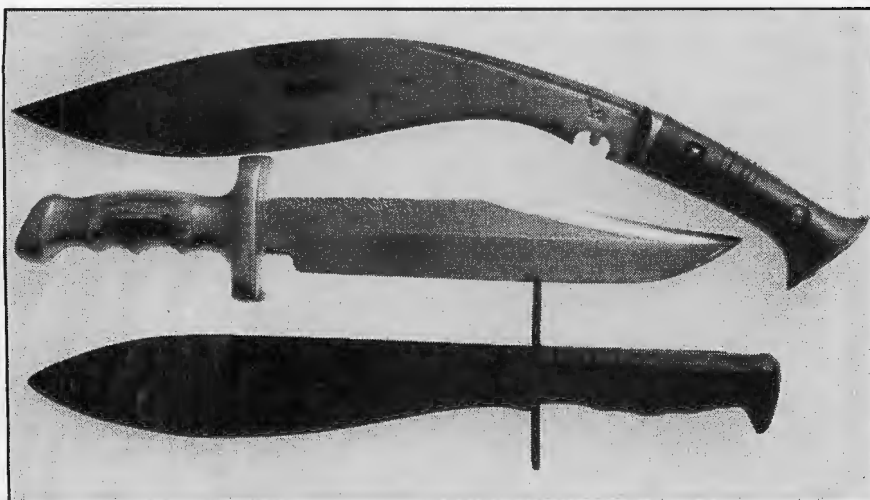
the relative emphasis that the soldier places on these three functions that will dictate what type of combat knife is his best personal choice.

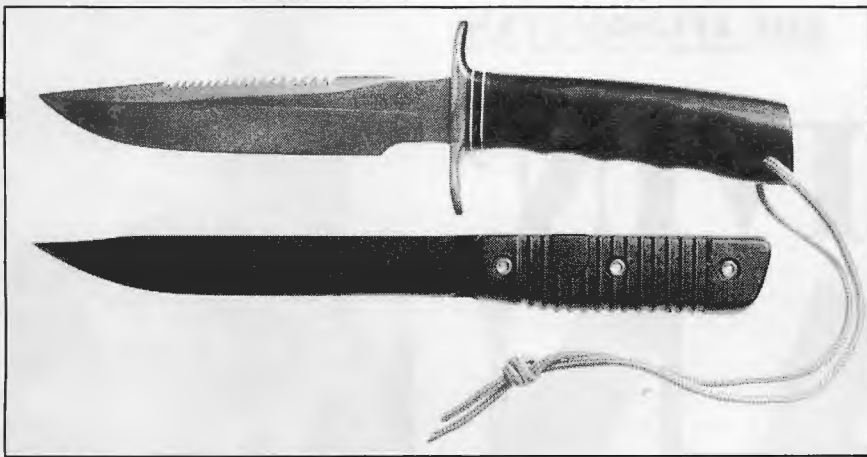
In general, combat knives can be broken down into three broad categories. The first of these is the dagger type. These are typically straight, double-edged or nearly double-edged knives designed primarily as stabbing weapons. Usual blade length is 6-8 inches. Good examples of military issue combat knives in this category are the Fairbairn British Commando knife and the U.S. Case V-42 of First Special Service Force fame. Excellent commercial production examples include the Gerber Mark II, Guardian II, and TAC II, as well as the Al Mar Phantom and Applegate-Fairbairn. In the world of handmade or custom knives, top examples include the Randall Number 2 and the Applegate-Fairbairn made by Bill Harsey.

The dagger variety of combat knife is at its best as a stabbing weapon. A good dagger will slip into flesh with frightening ease. Indeed, they can even penetrate bone, such as ribs, with only a little extra effort. Some authorities would have you believe that this type knife is no good for slashing cuts. That is complete nonsense. When properly sharpened, a good dagger can slash a limb to the bone with ease and slash a throat with the best. Daggers as a group are light knives, and consequently fast. But, they do not have the weight for chopping and are not as useful in the utility tool role as are other varieties. However, for silent killing and as emergency weapons they are superb.

The second general category of combat knife is the general purpose knife. Like the daggers, these typically run about 6-8 inches in blade length. Unlike the daggers, they

BELOW: Three classic choppers, from top to bottom: a World War II-issue Gurkha Kukri, a Ruana Bowie knife, and the U.S. M1917 Bolo. Photo: Chuck Karwan





**ABOVE:** A study in contrasts in two top quality knives. The Randall Number 1 Fighting Knife (top) is in stark contrast to the Finnish military puuko on the bottom. The large double-logged crossguard on this Randall is of dubious purpose on a combat knife. A short, single guard or no guard is less apt to get in the way. Photo: Chuck Karwan



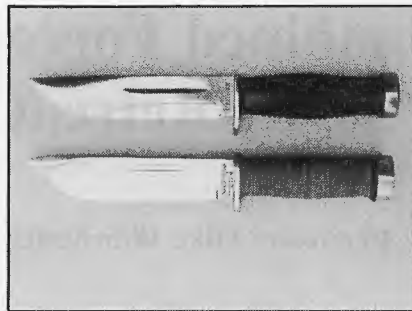
**Al Mar's rendition of the Applegate-Fairbairn fighting knife is an excellent example of a commercial combat knife of the dagger type. Photo: courtesy Al Mar Knives**

are predominantly single-edged knives, although the back may be partially sharpened on some. The major difference is in the blade shape, which is generally wider and offers a substantial amount of curve or belly. The vast majority of the general purpose combat knives are shaped along the lines of a small- to medium-sized, clipped-point Bowie knife, although some are straight backed or even have upswept points. In general, they are not quite as effective a stabbing weapon as daggers although they can be, thanks to the curved edge, a more effective slashing weapon. They do not have enough weight to be very effective at chopping — either as a tool or as a weapon.

The claim to fame of the general purpose combat knife is that thanks to its blade shape it is a far better utility tool than the dagger. The simple fact is that the typical soldier will use his knife thousands of times as a tool and rarely, if at all, as a weapon. For this reason it makes sense for most troops to select a personal combat knife which can be an excellent tool, while at the same time retaining good effectiveness as a killing instrument. Excellent issue examples include the U.S. Navy Mark II or Marine Fighting-Utility Knife (Ka-Bar), the World War II U.S. Cattaraugus 225Q Commando Knife, and the British MOD Jungle Survival Knife. Some top commercial examples include the Gerber BMF and LMF, the Buck Special, the Al Mar SERE fixed blade series, and the Cold Steel Master Tanto. Among the custom or handmade variety, superb examples include the Randall Numbers 1 and 14, the Sornberger "In Country," and the Terzuola M18 Combatmaster, to name a few. The new Phrobis M9 bayonet recently adopted by the U.S. Army also fits into this category when it is being used in its knife role.

The third and last category of combat knife is what I call the choppers. These are large knives with heavy blades running 9-12 inches with a weight-forward balance. They are not to be confused with machetes, which have relatively thin, light blades.

The chopper combat knife comes in a wide variety of blade shapes. The category includes the large Bowies, yet also such diverse patterns as the Gurkha Kukri. Their common characteristic is having enough



**ABOVE:** These two World War II military issue combat knives represent the best of the breed for their time. Top is Case 337Q, bottom is Cattaraugus 225Q. Simple and effective weapons and excellent tools, neither have nor need features for knife dueling. Photo: Chuck Karwan

weight and length to serve as efficient chopping tools as well as weapons. They are just as useful for chopping vines as for chopping heads and thus can eliminate the necessity of carrying a machete. As weapons, the choppers generally have the capability of actually severing a human limb with one swipe. They are also the best of three types for use as an emergency digging tools. In general, they are poor stabbing weapons, though there are exceptions. Many are also poor slashers, but that is usually a function of the blade grind rather than blade shape. Some, like the better Bowies and the new Applegate-Fairbairn Combat Smatchet, are fully capable of being effective at stabbing, slashing, and chopping.

In general, they are less than efficient at the smaller utility tasks. Because of this, soldiers who carry a chopper generally also carry a small utility folder or fixed-blade knife as well. A chopper's major advantage is that it can make short work of many field tasks which would be difficult with a small-

er knife, yet they are awesome weapons in close encounters of the worst kind. Their major drawback is that they are heavy and bulky. Some military issue examples include the U.S. M1917 Bolo, the Gurkha Kukri, and the OSS Smatchet. Impressive commercial examples include the Cold Steel Trail Master Bowie, the Blackjack Knives Marauder Mk 1, the awesome new Cold Steel Kukri and the Gerber/Cutlery Shoppe Predator. Some exceptional handmade or custom versions include the larger Ruana and Randall Bowies, the Applegate-Fairbairn Combat Smatchet made by Bill Harsey, and the Darn Do Chinese-style fighting knife by Bob Lum.

Undoubtedly, when one tries to classify all combat knives into just three categories there will be a few that either overlap or do not quite fit in *any* category. An example would be a heavy-bladed Bowie of about 8 inches, which could be a general purpose knife or a chopper. The U.S. M3 fighting knife is dagger shaped, but the blade back is only sharpened part way. I would call it a dagger type, though some would put it in the general purpose category. I find it useful to use these three categories, because they each have distinct advantages and applications.

There is a tendency in some circles to endorse one single type, such as a 9-inch Bowie, to the exclusion of all others. This belies the usefulness of the other varieties. It also ignores the fact that different troops need different knives, because they operate in different situations and have different missions. For example, elite units who are conducting night raids, prisoner snatches, or long range recon often favor the dagger-type combat knife. For them, the utility applications of the knife are far secondary to its capability as a weapon for silent killing. On the other hand, a soldier in a conventional infantry unit will rarely have need of a knife as a weapon. For him, a knife that is more useful as a tool holds a lot of appeal.

*Continued on page 95*

# DRIVIN' IVAN HOME

## Muj Combined Force Victory Fuels Soviet Retreat

Text & Photos by Mike Winchester



Muj commander Ahmad Shah Massoud (in green down jacket) on heights above Koran Valley making radio contact with assault forces below. Massoud is one of most famous mujahideen leaders known to Westerners and is public enemy number one to Soviets and DRA army.

*[Editor's note: As we go to print, events are unfolding rapidly in Afghanistan. Mujahideen forces are conducting major attacks against DRA army garrisons, while the Soviets continue to withdraw their military forces to the north.]*

*This article provides a backdrop for understanding how the mujahideen have been able to successfully mount major conventional military assaults against heavily fortified, gunned, and manned positions — a feat unheard of only a few years ago.]*

### HANDS-ON REPORTAGE

Based in Bangkok, Thailand, Mike Winchester travels the globe to deliver firsthand sitreps from many of the world's forgotten wars. His most recent stories in *Soldier of Fortune* have covered resistance groups in Burma and

political intrigue in Pakistan, the last being "Probing Peshawar" in our June '87 issue.

Author Mike Winchester (center) with mujahideen companions in Panjshir Valley, Afghanistan.



**T**HE capture of Koran was among the earliest major heliborne assault operations of the war in Afghanistan and was carried out with the precision of a well-planned training exercise. In the post-dawn cool of a mid-May morning in 1982, before the sun had turned the sky to a harsh steel-blue sheet of Afghan summer, Soviet Mi-8 Hip assault gunships and lumbering Mi-6 Hook transports of the Kunduz-based 181st Helicopter Regiment were thumping southward.

Behind them, already lost in the folds of the parched hills of Badakhshan, lay the Afghan army's forward operational base at Faizabad, capital of this northeastern province. To their left and east, still dark in shadows cast by the rising sun, air crews stared out at the towering 16,000-foot peaks separating them from the Wakhan corridor and the snowscape of the Pamirs beyond — the land called the "Roof of the World." To their forward right (southwest) rose layer upon layer of mountains, the main spine of the Hindu Kush, a fantastic jumble of snow-capped peaks tinged pink in the dawn light. Directly below was the Afghan army-held



Small arms instruction at Takhar training base. Weapons shown are Chinese Type 56-1 (folding stock) assault rifles.

town of Jurm, then the deep trench of the Yamgan. And, at the end of the Yamgan, now less than 90 clicks away and closing fast, was their own target: the remote, twin valleys of Koran and Monjan.

The success of the Soviet assault was due to two simple factors: total surprise and total mujahideen disorganization. In the wide, stony valley of Koran, troops of the air assault battalion met no resistance on landing and subsequently had only a brief exchange of fire with a few *dushman* [enemy] from the nearby village of Razer. And they took to the hills quick enough.

The real fighting was expected in neighboring Monjan, where the mujahideen of the Peshawar-based *Jamiat-i-Islami* (Islamic Society) commanded by Guldad Khan, had been preparing defensive positions since early 1981. But as the Soviets fanned out from their LZs against the main guerrilla stronghold in the village of Shahrán, they met resistance that registered between feeble and nonexistent. In an episode that still causes red faces in *Jamiat*'s Peshawar offices, the mujahideen fled in panic almost before the last Soviet choppers had touched down. They left behind large caches of new weapons and ammunition and some of the most vital real estate in northern Afghanistan.

No great grasp of strategy is required to see the importance of Koran and Monjan to resistance forces in northern Afghanistan. At the beginning of the war, two key logistics trails linked mujahideen sanctuaries and supply dumps in northern Pakistan to the sprawling Afghan province of Badakhshan, gateway to the northeast and the Panjshir Valley. One, the Tupkhanah Pass, had been blocked off by regime forces in 1980. So by 1981 the vast bulk of supplies reaching the

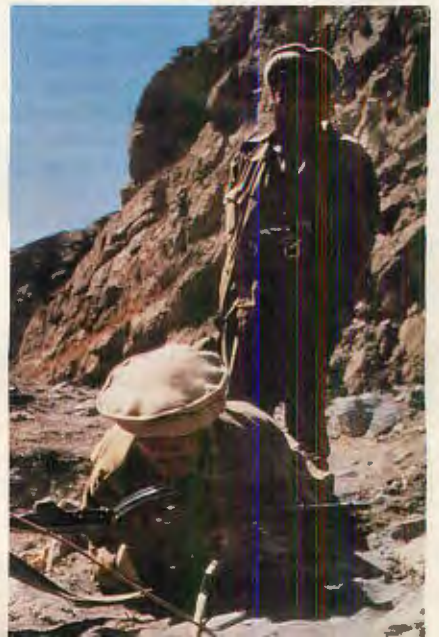
northeastern resistance was being funnelled through the other. Crossing two major passes, the route was physically tough on both men and pack animals. But unlike supply trails passing close to Soviet posts near Kabul, it was safe and it was quick. It debouched into Badakhshan through Koran and Monjan.

The May 1982 loss of the twin valleys was felt most immediately in the Panjshir. A thorn in Kabul's side since 1979, the strategic valley northeast of Afghanistan's capital was by 1982 a major focus of regime and Soviet concern. Close to the Salang Highway, Moscow's jugular linking Kabul to the Soviet border, the Panjshir was emerging as an increasingly well-organized focus of resistance under a former engineering student called Ahmad Shah Massoud. Between 1980 and 1981 the valley had been targeted for four major offensives, none of which had achieved much beyond supplying the local resistance with new Soviet weaponry. In 1982, two more combined-arms assaults involving Soviet frontal aviation, motor-rifle ground forces and heliborne air-assault units were launched. The first came in May, coinciding with the Koran operation; the second, bigger still, in August. It was at this critical juncture that incompetence and cowardice at Koran cost the embattled Panjshir its most vital logistics lifeline to Pakistan.

Even before the August offensive, Massoud was already reflecting on retaking Koran. But paradoxically his main concern

was getting out of the Panjshir itself. As a meat grinder for Soviet ground forces, the narrow 100 kilometer-long valley had achieved a murderous fame. But as a guerrilla base area suitable for organizing and training, its value was fast diminishing as Soviet attacks became more frequent. Massoud was driven by the conviction that in order to survive and expand in the context of a protracted war, it was crucial to build a wider politico-military organization reaching well beyond the Panjshir. The key was to develop a number of self-sustaining

AK-toting muj of Central Forces unit receives mine-clearing instruction. With much of Afghanistan blanketed with land mines, such skills will be necessary long after a Soviet withdrawal.





but interlinked guerrilla bases where military and civil organization could progress. To remain trapped in the Panjshir was, in effect, slow-motion suicide.

Mounting Soviet pressure coupled with the need to break loose from the one-valley war pushed the Panjshiri leadership into their biggest gamble of the war — accepting a Soviet cease-fire offer that came in December 1982. For the Soviets, the advantages of the deal were obvious. At a stroke they could neutralize a perennial threat which had already cost them heavy casualties, and transfer units to the Pakistan border. The political angle was just as important since the cease-fire furthered a policy of fragmenting the resistance, aggravating old tensions in its ranks and sowing new doubts.

At that level, the Soviet 40th Army command in Kabul undoubtedly succeeded. Massoud's rivals and critics — many conducting the war from the comfort of newly purchased villas in Peshawar — closed in like hungry wolves. The smear campaign that followed was virulent even by Afghan standards. Before long "reports" were circulating that the Panjshiri commander had been feted by communist dignitaries in leading hotels in Kabul. As one of Massoud's lieutenants later told this correspondent, "We were under tremendous psychological pressure to end the truce from both friends and critics. In the end we got to wondering which was better — the cease fire or being bombarded."

But the year's breathing space was not wasted. Setting up logistics and resupply routes was a major priority, and with Koran still in regime hands, efforts were made to upgrade new trails across the wild mountains of Nuristan to the east of the Panjshir. Mobile forces from the valley launched an expedition to secure the neighboring valley of Andarab. And Massoud himself traveled north to Badakhshan to firm up links with other Jamiat commanders.

In December 1983 a key meeting of

**Central Forces troops depart staging area for attack at Koran. Muj in foreground carries RPG-7.**

Jamiat commanders from across the northeast was held in Ishkamish District of Takhar Province. The conference brought together many of the big guns of the northeastern resistance, including Massoud; Islamuddin and Sayyid Ikromuddin (both from Ishkamish); Abdul Haiy from Nahrin in Baghlan Province; Foroul from Andarab; Abdul Rahim Khan of Khost-o-Fering; and Arianpour from the valley of Keshem in southern Badakhshan. Established as a result of the talks was an umbrella alliance called the Supervisory Council of the North, better known simply as the *Shura*, or council. Within this consultative framework began the slow work of building up base areas across the rugged flanks of the Hindu Kush.

The truce ended abruptly in April 1984 with the seventh Soviet/DRA offensive into the Panjshir, the biggest single operation launched since the Christmas 1979 invasion itself. Forewarned, the mujahideen and the civil population had mostly already left the valley and the communists were able to establish five garrison enclaves along the lower reaches of the Panjshir. In June, around the time *Newsweek* was reporting Babrak Karmal's claims of a "return to normalcy," resistance fighters filtered back, and for the rest of the year fighting flared continuously, punctuated by another major Soviet offensive in September. By year's end things were indeed "normal" again; communist forces were taking casualties and on the defensive the length of the valley.

The battle for the Panjshir continued through 1985, a grueling war of attrition for both sides. As the muj saw it, communist objectives were threefold: first, to exhaust the resistance; second, to move civilians from Kabul back into the valley and foster that elusive "normalcy"; and third, to

block Massoud in his efforts to extend the war north. For the guerrillas themselves, now fighting without a civilian support base, often hungry and with morale ebbing, the goals were simple enough — frustrate communist objectives and relentlessly raise the cost of occupation of the valley.

The turning point came in May that year. Pushgur, the Afghan army's most exposed garrison, cut off and under continuous pressure, finally fell. Four hundred prisoners and large stocks of arms and ammunition fell into resistance hands. The base was swiftly reoccupied by Soviet commandos, unopposed by the muj. But the writing was very clearly on the wall: the Panjshir was going to cost and cost a lot. (The DRA Pushgur garrison finally conceded defeat and abandoned the base in the face of unremitting pressure in September 1987.)

In December 1985 came a turning point of another kind. Massoud and a group of hardcore Panjshiri muj finally left the valley and moved north to the Ursaj region. Central to much of the northeast, Ursaj had been free since the beginning of the war and gave on to the long Farkhar Valley running down the northern flank of the Hindu Kush. It made an excellent base for regional organizational work.

Almost inevitably, the move from the Panjshir was interpreted in Peshawar and by many of the Western press corps in Delhi as a reflection of Massoud's final defeat and flight. But as he put it to SOF last year, "That analysis was really a long way from the truth. Leaving the Panjshir was based on a constructive plan that went back a long way."

Massoud remained based in Ursaj for a year, organizing Shura forces and laying plans. His analysis of the war was of a protracted conflict falling into four broad stages: 1) the setting up of pockets of guerrilla resistance, a process which had begun well before the Soviet invasion and was largely completed within the first few months after it; 2) a period of strategic defensive; 3) a period of strategic offensive;

**Central Forces radioman at Koran.**



and 4) a brief and climactic final offensive coinciding with popular uprisings within communist-held urban areas.

Massoud's analysis drew to some extent on Chinese and Vietnamese guerrilla strategies which had proved highly successful in the 1940s and '50s. And while culture and geography were continents apart, the Afghan and East Asian situations were not entirely dissimilar. The mujahideen, like the guerrillas of the Chinese and Vietnamese communist parties, were a ruraly based movement, enjoying wide peasant support, pitted against a conventionally superior foreign enemy controlling urban centers and trying to hold open lines of communication between them. For all the difference, it was still a war of countryside against city.

By early 1986, Panjshiri resistance leaders saw the war as already well into the longest and most testing period, stage two. The overall balance of forces was still clearly in favor of the communists. On the side of the resistance, fractured by race, tribe, religion and politics, the stress was necessarily on organizational work, building up a politico-military infrastructure that would be able to withstand the pressures of the long haul.

In the northeast, as just about everywhere else, the most immediate task was military

**Soviet and DRA army forces' presence in northeastern Afghanistan has been substantially rolled back since 1986, indicating the changing tide of battle as mujahideen gain organizational and tactical sophistication.**



## AFGHAN ELITE: MUJ CENTRAL FORCES

First formed in early 1985, the Council of the North's Central Forces (CF) today number several hundred men and spearhead all major operations in northeast Afghanistan. Set up as a training pool for junior leaders, the CF constitute a military and religious mujahideen elite. The Knights Templar of the Crusades would probably be about the closest equivalent you could find in the Western military tradition.

In sharp distinction to mujahideen anywhere else in the country, volunteers for central units go through a selection process before being accepted for training. Applicants require character and religious references from their previous commander, combat experience, a high standard of physical fitness, and — something unheard of in most muj groups — functional literacy. Early intakes tended to lean heavily on Panjshiri guerrillas, probably the most combat-tested in the north, and men whose educational standards are often higher than elsewhere. Even today, Panjshiri make up some 25-30 percent of any given unit.

Basic training in 25-man units takes one month in one of three special training camps set up in 1986 in the backwoods of the high Hindu Kush. The stress is on basic fieldcraft, small-arms training, heavy-weapons instruction, and additional specialized courses are given in map reading, mine detection and clearing, and demolition. With communist mines probably the single biggest cause of mujahideen casualties today, the mine detection/clearing classes are heavily attended.

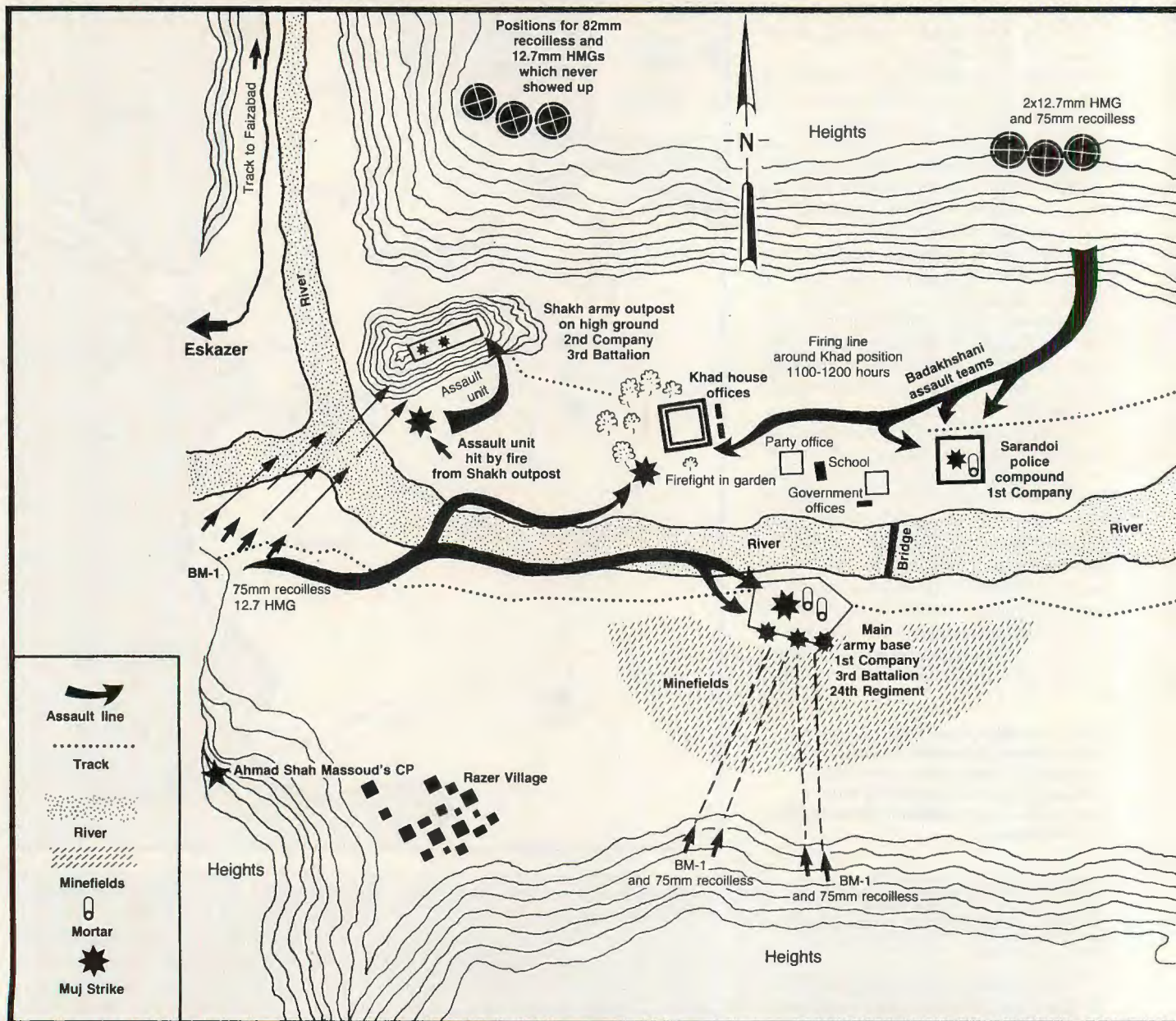
In terms of sheer training hours, "ideological training" is almost as important as military instruction. Prayers five times a day go without saying among the muj. This training involves additional study of the Muslim holy book, the Koran, lectures in Islamic theology and history, and the Hadith, traditions from the life of the Prophet Mohammed. There are also courses on modern Afghan history, current affairs and, on the know-your-enemy principle, communism. Implicit in all this is a highly political message: The ideal mujahid is fighting to serve the people of Afghanistan and set a religious example, rather than just shoot up communist posts and live off villagers for free (an

attitude that is dangerously widespread among many muj groups).

Also unusual in the Afghan context is that every Central Force's unit, in training and the field, is composed of volunteers from a range of provinces rather than — as is typical — from a single village or valley. The mixed geographic composition is aimed at breaking down deeply ingrained localism and narrow loyalties to valley or tribe that have underlain much of the mutual suspicion and hostility within the resistance camp.

On completion of basic training, units are put *through* additional courses in their own specialization: infantry assault, heavy weapons, or anti-aircraft. From then on, a unit moves between operations in the field and refresher training courses in a symbiotic interaction between theory and practice. On occasion, an experienced CF unit may spend time at a base camp training other muj groups.

The basic CF unit still operates at platoon level, 25-30 men, depending on its particular specialization. Smaller CF teams attached to Massoud's mobile command are specialists in radio communications, explosives and demolition and cartography.



organization. For Massoud and his lieutenants, that involved three distinct but overlapping objectives: first, streamlining effective, coordinated fighting units from the various scattered commands under the Shura's umbrella; second, building a trained, disciplined and motivated cadre of junior leaders intended to serve as the backbone for future expansion; and third, but not least, strengthening command and control across the most rugged region of Afghanistan where a communications infrastructure was virtually nonexistent.

Translated into practical terms, streamlining muj commands meant extending across the northeast generally by a system of tiered guerrilla organization first developed in the Panjshir between 1980 and 1983. Unique to the Afghan guerrilla experience, it's worth looking at in some detail.

At the highest level, Shura territory was divided up into its component base areas (*paygah*). Usually large valleys with popula-

tions of anywhere between 50,000-100,000, these are areas where Jamiat is well-entrenched and relatively well-organized. Each guerrilla base area is headed by a politico-military supremo called an *amir*.

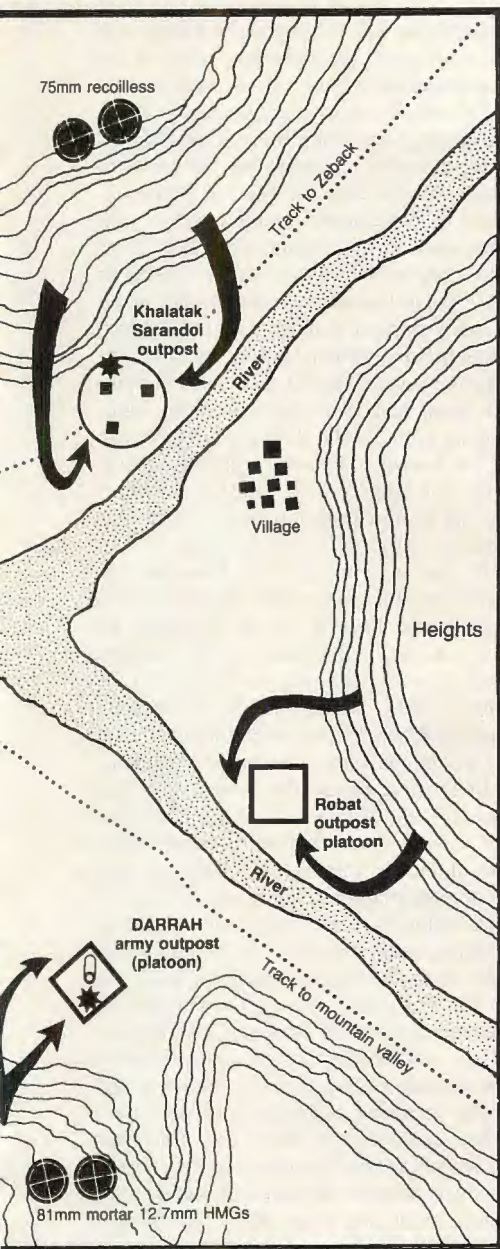
Below that, each base is subdivided into garrison (*qaragah*) areas, with on average 10-20 standing mujahideen garrisons in any given base area. Each garrison is responsible for the defense and organization of a number of villages within its AO and the standing garrison force is often found in the most important of these villages. In theory the system thus reaches from village level up to regional level, and in this respect alone is unlike anything to be found elsewhere in Afghanistan.

Corresponding to the territorial divisions is a pyramid-shaped structure of military organization. At its broad village base, in areas generally well away from combat zones, are to be found so-called "security groups" (*gruh-e-amniati*). In effect, these

units are a type of home-guard militia made up of youths, older men and farming men serving part time. Fulfilling a basically police-cum-security role, they are armed correspondingly with mostly old weapons.

Main local combat forces are called "strike groups" (*gruh-ye-zarbati*). Based in a local garrison, with either one or two groups for each garrison area, the strike units tend to vary in size from an overstrength platoon of 30-50 men to a small half-company. Their primary role is the defense of their own garrison area. Units are generally armed with Soviet AKMs, Chinese Type 56 assault rifles, RPGs, and in some areas where fighting with regime and Soviet forces is frequent, with a range of heavy weapons: mortars, recoilless rifles, ground-to-ground 107mm rockets, etc.

Until recently, at the apex of the organizational pyramid have been "mobile groups" (*gruh-ye-mohtarek*). Coming under the direct command of the *amir* of



Lines of assault during mujahideen attacks on DRA strongholds in Koran Valley, 29 October 1987.

Panjshiri mujahideen, today's central units are carefully recruited, and trained both militarily and ideologically before being divided into three basic specialties: infantry, heavy weapons and anti-aircraft units. Serving both as an operational strike force and at the same time as a training pool for junior leaders, these units constitute probably the only real mujahideen elite in Afghanistan.

If the divisions are clear enough on paper, the realities of warfare in Afghanistan make for plenty of flexibility. Experienced strike groups can and frequently are deployed in operations well beyond their static garrison role. Similarly, mobile groups are often used for assaults or ambushes days march away from their home base areas. In a war moving rapidly to the offensive, operational requirements take priority over local divisions and loyalties.

The third leg of Massoud's military build-up was improving the Shura's command and control system. Up to a point, that depended simply on increased contacts with other major Jamiat commanders in the region, men like Arianpour of Keshem, Abdul Haiy of Nahrin, Najmuddin of Wardooj. And compared to the first years of the war, face-to-face meetings and conferences involving numerous commanders are today commonplace. But probably more important, and little noticed outside the northeast, has been the quiet setting up of a radio communications network capable of both coordinating muj operations across a wide swath of territory and monitoring regime radio traffic. Established with some help from friends of Jamiat abroad, this network has proved crucial in centralizing resistance activities in northern Afghanistan.

Alongside the work of military reorganization, the Shura has also focused on the need to mobilize the civilian population and build up a civil infrastructure including a basic administration, an education system, and rudimentary medical facilities. To say that civil and political organization in liberated areas has not been one of the strong points of the Afghan resistance probably counts as one of the understatement of the past decade. But as commanders in the northern Shura have come to recognize, that weakness will inevitably take a toll on the resistance, particularly as the regime finesses its own political pitch, promising freedom of worship, a multiparty political setup, and guarantees for private enterprise. In classic East Asian guerrilla fashion, the stress in Shura areas is on actively involving the civil population in the war effort and behind the goals of the jihad, not just squeezing it for taxes and free food.

In the three years from 1985 to 1987, a watershed change occurred in the northeast. By the end of last year it was apparent to even the most casual observer that resist-

ance organization had progressed so far as to be irreversible. Short of introducing another half-million men or tactical nukes, Moscow had lost the game. The Hindu Kush was covered with simply too many well-entrenched base areas to subdue with the resources available to the Soviet 40th Army.

The military initiative was with Massoud throughout and was used mainly for clearing regime garrisons from the Shura's mountain strongholds. These bases, usually forts close to former government offices, not only complicated muj communications and supply lines but also served as centers for regime intelligence operations: buying assets, gathering military intel and sowing differences between local commanders.

That the targets were all "soft" Afghan army garrisons rather than Soviet bases was no accident. Massoud's concern was military and political. Militarily, he wanted to use the operations as a means of testing out organizational techniques and command, control, and intelligence procedures. Effectively, he was taking the first tentative steps from purely hit-and-run, small-unit guerrilla tactics to mobile warfare; the concentration of larger, semi-conventional forces from scattered areas for a conventional assault followed by rapid dispersal. In the classic theories of guerrilla warfare, the switch to mobile war comes in stage three, the strategic offensive. But as he explained to SOF, Massoud was interested in making trial runs within the strategic defensive period of the war.

At the same time, he was also building up his stockpile of captured heavy weapons and ammunition. This was basic both in terms of a gradual shift to conventional engagements and also for his own operational independence vis-a-vis his other source of supply, Pakistan. Like many states providing sanctuary to a guerrilla movement, Pakistan has not been averse to attempting to fine tune the war across the border through the leverage it can exert as the conduit for foreign arms aid. In the southeastern border regions, that has not been too difficult as a result of the dependency built up on quick resupply from across the Pak border.

By contrast, Massoud has consistently declined to allow foreign military intelligence to run his war for him. The position has been firm from the beginning. While he is grateful for Pakistan for its unflagging support of the Afghan jihad, he is not ready to enter into deals with the Pak military that sacrifice his political and operational independence. Period. Needless to say, he has few fans among Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) chiefs. It is no coincidence that he remains one of the few major muj commanders never once to have visited Peshawar since 1979.

At the political level, the assaults on regime garrisons were aimed simply at creating an impression in the popular mind of an irresistible momentum of resistance victory. The flipside was underlining the regime's weakness and vulnerability. To this

each base area, mobile forces are dedicated primarily for a wide-ranging role, offensive or defensive as circumstances dictate, within the limits of the base. Made up of guerrillas with combat experience, mostly graduated from strike groups, these units are highly mobile and lightly armed. AK-74s, AKMs, RPGs, RPK light machine guns are favorite weapons. Where necessary, a mobile group can borrow heavier weapons from a strike group in any given AO. The stress in training and in ops is on moving fast and hitting hard.

Building a cadre of junior officers and the equivalent of NCOs has necessitated adding one more layer to the top of the pyramid in the form of "central units" (*qattah-e-markazi*). As their name suggests, these fall under the operational command of the Shura's center rather than that of any base area; effectively that means under Massoud's own command in his capacity as Shura chairman. Based on a hard core of



## KHAD — THE KGB'S MEAN LITTLE BROTHER

Since the communist coup of 1978, Afghan security and intelligence has passed through several incarnations which have seen it expand to become probably the most brutal and blood-stained secret police force of any in the world — the KGB included.

It began life under the radical *Khalq* [Masses] wing of the ruling People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA), as the Organization for the Protection of the Interests of Afghanistan or, in its Pashto acronym, AGSA. Then, briefly in late 1979, under Khalqi strongman Hafizullah Amin, it was reorganized as the Workers' Intelligence Bureau (KAM). But by far its longest incarnation, from 1980 to 1986, was as the State Information Services, or *Khad*.

Following the Soviets' December 1979 invasion that murdered Amin and placed Babrak Karmal and the *Parcham* [Banner] wing of the PDPA in power, *Khad* was taken over by a Parchami with longstanding links to the KGB, Dr. Najibullah. Under his direction — and close KGB tutelage — it was purged of Khalqi elements, rapidly expanded, and thoroughly Sovietized.

In 1985 the Soviets dumped Karmal and moved the tough Najibullah to head the still faction-plagued PDPA. Clear indication of how both he and Moscow saw *Khad*'s role came in January 1986, when the service was elevated to full cabinet status as the Ministry for State Security, or WAD, under Parcham loyalist Major General Gholam Faruq Yaqubi. But even today, it's still widely known by its former acronym of *Khad*.

Like its Soviet mentor, the KGB, *Khad* is divided into a hierarchy of departments and directorates. Its duties involve penetration and surveillance of other *Kabul* power centers such as the party, the army and other ministries; combatting the regime's domestic opposition; and intelligence and covert operations abroad with an almost exclusive emphasis on Pakistan and Iran. Training in the Soviet Union or East Germany is now a standard requirement for all senior and mid-level operatives, and, according to mujahideen sources, even children in their early teens caught trying to infiltrate resistance groups have told of brief training stints in Soviet Central Asia.

Today, *Khad*'s preeminence in the strife-ridden communist administration is unchallenged. As one Afghan analyst monitoring events in *Kabul* puts it, "The only real institution the regime has succeeded in organizing has been *Khad*." With an estimated 60,000-70,000 employees on its payroll and a further

100,000 part-time informers and contacts, the secret police apparatus reaches into most areas of public and private life in zones controlled by the regime, not to mention areas under mujahideen control. Politically *Khad* wields far greater clout than either the Defense Ministry, controlling the defection-prone army, or the Interior Ministry, a Khalqi bastion which commands some 30,000 heavily armed *sarandoi* (military police). For its own employees, a nasty mixture of committed Marxist activists and urban riff-raff, it offers a range of attractive benefits, including high pay scales, exemption from army call-up and access to prostitutes, liquor and cars.

Inevitably, much of *Khad*'s energy has been directed at infiltrating the Islamic resistance and the seven-party muj alliance based in Peshawar. That task has only been made easier by the massive social upheaval caused by the movement of up to seven million refugees fleeing to Pakistan, Iran and other areas inside Afghanistan. Another growing priority has been the terrorist campaign of bombing aimed at Pakistan which since 1986 has mushroomed dramatically.

Nonetheless, as the quiet war of infiltration and subversion continues, the Afghan resistance is becoming better organized to deal with the threat and learning a new security consciousness. Some parties now have their own intelligence organizations, and better organized field commanders — such as Ahmad Shah Massoud — have their own agents working deep within *Khad*.

But the biggest change in *Khad* in recent years has been its increasing militarization. Like its big brother, it fields its own armed units that are well-trained, well-paid, and notably immune to the chronic unreliability and brittle morale plaguing the army. For a while (mainly 1983-84), *Khad* troops proved effective as "counter-gangs," dressing as mujahideen and sowing confusion among the rural population and already badly fragmented resistance factions. More recently (1985 onwards), the emphasis has shifted to ambushes of guerrilla arms caravans returning from Pakistan, with *Khad* men sometimes operating in conjunction with Soviet Spetsnaz units, more often independently.

As a factor in the defense of the regime in its twilight days, *Khad* military units — perhaps 10,000-15,000 strong — and armed *Khad* activists will certainly play a leading role. As one Western analyst in Peshawar puts it, "After *Kabul* these people have no place else to go. They're not going to be coming out with their hands up." Ultimately, for a politically and morally bankrupt regime, that's not going to alter the outcome. It will, however, make for a lot more blood on the carpet. Expect to hear more of *Khad*.

extent, what Massoud could not afford were setbacks; he was playing to the gallery and the outcome of the show had to be all but guaranteed before the curtain went up.

Two major ops were undertaken in 1986. In August, joint Shura forces captured Farkhar, a regime garrison on the northern slopes of the Kush in Takhar Province. Then in November, another Shura task force overran the Afghan army 20th Division's HQ at Nahrin in a two-day battle. In 1987, the follow-through came in July when an army base at Kalafgan on the Takhar-Badakhshan provincial border fell to a lightning muj onslaught. In each case, surprise was total and resistance casualties light, ranging from 21 KIA at Nahrin to a mere two KIA at Kalafgan. In between the attacks, new units were being formed, training camps set up, and training programs for the rapidly expanding central forces got underway.

By late summer of 1987 Massoud was planning to hit another base. The choice was now getting limited and lay basically between Koran and Monjan in the east and Borkah, near Ishkamish, in the west of the Shura's AO. In late August, Massoud targeted Koran and arranged for the word to get around that he was interested in Borkah.

In most respects, the Koran operation was typical of Massoud's style of warfare. For several weeks before the battle there was intensive intelligence gathering and meticulous planning. Intel sources included local villagers, army men from within the garrison, and video film and still blow ups taken from the heights above the base. On 26 October, three days before the assault, the fruit of weeks of work was distilled into a large sandlot model of the target valley on which each enemy position, building and heavy-weapons emplacement was represented in cardboard. With a senior defector on hand to answer queries, a series of briefings was held for commanders and men involved in the operation. Made clear to each muj unit was its target; the number of enemy officers and men it could expect to be defending it; the sort of weapons they were equipped with; and the position's weak points. Nothing, it seemed, was left to chance.

As in earlier ops, the 550-man assault force was drawn from across a wide swath of the northeast. In addition to five central units, there were mobile and strike groups from Panjshir, Khost, Baghland Province, Nahrin, Ishkamish, Farkhar, Keshem and Warduj. Here in embryo were the makings of what was intended to be a truly national liberation army.

But in several key respects, Koran was unlike anything the northeastern resistance had attempted before. On the plus side, this was the first major op under cover of Stingers. It speaks volumes for the politics of arms distribution in Afghanistan that only in October 1987 did the main center of organized resistance in the north receive a vital weapons system that had already been in use in other parts of the country for one whole year. But by happy coincidence the first Stinger consignment reached Massoud in

time for Koran. Under these changed circumstances, it was decided the assault should go in at first light rather than in the middle to late afternoon period favored in the days of quick reactive airstrikes.

On the negative side, there was the position of Koran itself, a remote valley in an area of far lower than average population density. The result was a logistics nightmare moving up ammunition, weapons and supplies over extremely rugged terrain while at the same time trying to maintain operational security. Matters weren't improved by a heavy fall of early snow in the first week of October which lasted two days and abruptly blocked passes along the approach routes to the valley. That left some units separated from any logistics support. At a stroke, this little disruption set the whole plan back by three weeks, thereby pissing off the small Western press contingent covering the action no little. There are plenty of better places to kill time than in a small village at 15,000 feet in the Hindu Kush amid 2-foot snowdrifts.

The other complicating factor was the base itself. To block muj supply caravans moving along the valley floor, the garrison had built not simply one fort but an interlocking pattern of defensive positions. The anchor was an army base manned by some 70 men of the 3rd Battalion of the army's 24th Regiment, and backed by 120mm mountain mortars and 76mm howitzers. The base had two outposts: one called Darrah on the same side of the river running along the valley at its eastern end; the other, a far bigger affair across the river, atop an outcrop of rock that dominated the western end of the valley and the approach from the resistance's forward staging point at the village of Eskazer. This spot, called Shahk, was defended by the 3rd Battalion's 2nd Company and was to be source of much grief.

Across the river from the army base was a heavily defended walled compound manned by a company of *sarandoi*, or DRA military police. Don't be fooled by the word "police" — *sarandoi* are effectively infantry troops, sometimes with their own armor.

Wounded muj awaits medical assistance.



DRA army POWs after battle at Koran.

What differentiates them from the army is that they come under the control of the interior ministry rather than defense. At Koran they fielded their own outpost at a spot called Kalatak at the eastern end of the valley covering the approach road from the Soviet-held town of Zebak.

Not far from the *sarandoi* compound was a complex of buildings that housed the local offices of WAD, the Ministry of State Security (far better known by its acronym *Khad*, the regime's notorious secret police who today field their own military units).

Finally, out of sight but not out of mind, were another 300-plus pro-regime militia in the neighboring valley of Monjan. While they couldn't be excluded from the bigger picture, they were not expected to play a role in the critical battle for Koran itself.

Present then were all four of the regime's military props: army (Ministry of Defense), *sarandoi* (Ministry of Interior), *Khad* (Ministry of State Security), and militia (Ministry of Tribes and Nationalities). The mix was no accident. In Koran as elsewhere in Afghanistan, these various forces reinforce each other, and balance each other off, a reflection of the murderous political rivalries endemic even in the twilight days of Afghan communism. In all, that made for seven separate positions, each to be approached by different infantry and support units, along different trails, under cover of darkness, over brutally inhospitable mountain terrain, and in near freezing conditions of approaching winter. Then an exactly synchronized assault shortly after dawn. And all this before breakfast. Tactically it was the most complex operation undertaken by the resistance in the north.

Plans being plans and Afghanistan Afghanistan, reality turned the ideal sand model into a stage set for Murphy's Law. The first foul-up was a bad one and could, under different circumstances against a

more determined enemy (Soviets, for example), have jeopardized the whole operation. The high ground above the valley floor was to be dominated by units fielding what in muj parlance are termed "heavy weapons": BM-1 ground-to-ground 107mm rockets, 75mm and 82mm recoilless rifles, 82mm mortars, and DShK 12.7mm HMGs, or *Dashikas*. The initial barrage, under cover of which the infantry assault teams were to move, was to be laid down by these support units.

Using donkeys and locally recruited porters to help carry the weapons and ammunition, some teams left Eskazer, the forward staging post, as darkness was falling, the rest following at various times throughout the evening before the assault. Some units had only a couple of hours over relatively easy ground to reach their designated positions; others had the prospect of up to 10 hours trek and a climb of several thousand feet to reach heights dominating communist positions at the farther, eastern end of the valley.

The result was probably predictable. The combination of freezing temperatures, ice-covered rocks, unfamiliar terrain and a shortage of porters and pack animals took its toll. When the battle began shortly after dawn the next morning, up to 40 percent of the assault force's support fire was missing, the weapons still being manhandled up impossible slopes by exhausted men.

The other foul up was one of those things that can happen in any military operation anywhere, and frequently does. But at Koran it cost the element of tactical surprise along with several men's lives.

Hardcore communist resistance was expected to center on two key points: the army base, by virtue of its fortifications and numbers; and the *Khad* house, by virtue of *Khad* being *Khad*, an organization made up of committed regime supporters who aren't in the habit of giving quarter and certainly know they needn't expect any. Of these two positions, the word was that *Khad* was going to be the tough one.



Massoud's plan was to invest a central force infantry assault team which was to move along the river bank and under the heights of Shakh in the early hours right up to the walls of the Khad house. Exactly as the barrage on the army base opened up, this unit, commanded by one of Massoud's most experienced officers, was to storm the house before the opposition knew what had hit them. There were no perimeter defenses, only a walled garden. Khad effectives were said to number 20-30, and they, like the rest of the garrison, had no reason to imagine that the morning of 29 October was going to be any different than any other in an existence of mind-numbing monotony. The key to the Khad house was overwhelming force and total surprise.

So much for the plan. In reality, as the 4th Central Unit's point men crept into the garden around the building, they were surprised to meet a bleary-eyed Khad trooper stumbling toward them through the trees for a dawn crap. Now Massoud's central forces do have some neat little British submachine guns with integral silencers which clearly

did not come out of any tribal gun factory and would, in the circumstances, have been just the job had the unit in question been issued with one. History does not relate why it was not, nor for that matter whether the Khad man made it back to the house or not. What is clear is that at 0551 hours, a good half hour before the assault was supposed to go in, a fierce firefight broke out around the house, without silencers.

Within minutes, Kalashnikovs were supplemented by a Khad Goryunov machine gun which began raking the garden and forced the assault team back into the field on the other side of the wall. The heavy weapons which should have been in place on the heights above the position were still somewhere on the wrong side of the mountain. It was not an auspicious beginning.

At his CP several thousand feet above the western end of the valley, Massoud was left with no choice but to trigger the rest of the assault prematurely. Shortly after 0600, in the frozen half light of dawn, a ragged bombardment of communist positions the length of the valley began. From the CP, the action

around the Khad post was obscured by low clouds. But the battle for the army outpost on the Shakh heights across the river was very visible. And visibly another military foul up was underway.

According to plans, the Shakh post and its mortar positions were to have been brought under heavy weapons fire from two sides: from BM-1s across the river below it, and, more critically, from recoilless rifles and HMGs firing directly down on it from the cliffs above. This fire was vital to suppress the army mortars, and had the muj gunners been on the cliffs as planned there's no doubt they would have creamed the mortar crews in the first minutes of the action. Again, unfortunately, they were not. And before long both mortars were frantically lobbing bombs down onto the assault teams grouped near the base of the feature.

Things having gone this badly wrong, the assault team commanders had to choose between retreat or advancing up the track toward the post into the teeth of heavy automatic fire from its perimeter defenses. They advanced. By this time the BM-1s had



**ABOVE:** Muj lays down covering fire with Romanian AKM for withdrawing Central Forces troops.

joined the battle, and while they couldn't touch the mortar pits, they soon ranged in on the post's outer defenses sending up geysers of earth and sand and obscuring the action behind plumes of dirty grey smoke. Behind this much cover the assault teams pushed on up the track.

But it was the main army base that collapsed first. Defended by an understrength company, its main weakness had been obvious even on the sand model: an overextended perimeter of bunkers linked by communications trenches and only partially screened by minefields to the south. Within minutes of the firefight breaking out across the river around the Khad house, the bunkers were taking accurate BM-1 and recoilless fire from the high ground across the minefield. But as the conscript troops grabbed weapons and boots and ran to man the trenches, the ground assault broke on the base from the opposite direction, the river

bank along which two assault teams had been infiltrated during the night.

Since 1979 the Afghan army has never been noted for stiffness of morale or fighting resolve and Koran did nothing to improve the record. With the muj once over the perimeter trenches, the commanding officers, a major and two captains, ran for it amid the confusion, eventually making it to the nearest regime post at Sanglich more than a day's walk away. The base political commissar was wounded in a shoot-out, and most of the conscripts did what they've been doing for the past eight years once they get the chance — threw down their weapons and surrendered.

Within 10 minutes of the collapse of resistance at the army base, the first muj units breached the defenses at Shakh, overrunning the post by sheer force of numbers and momentum. Then, amid thrice-repeated cheers of "Allah-hu-Akbar!" [God is great], radio reports were coming in from across the valley that the sarandoi posts and other army positions were crumbling. Suddenly a battle had become a rout, and it was only 0730.

By 0800 Koran was in the bag. The air strikes which might have come, never came. And for good reason. The bunker housing the army base's communications facilities had been repeatedly hit by rocket and recoilless fire within the first minutes of the action, destroying the radio antenna and damaging the radio itself before any distress call could be gotten out to Faizabad. But even if a message had gotten out, it's a matter of debate whether any Soviet pilots would have been willing to ruin their breakfast over an Afghan garrison. By the end of last year, you didn't need high-grade intelligence to read Soviet frontal aviation's attitude on that one — none of our guys have their necks on the line, so why bother?

Mid-morning saw most of the muj assault

**BELOW:** Mujahideen armed with Romanian AKMs at Takhar training base receive fire-and-movement instruction.



**Muj "medevac" from attack at Khad (Afghan regime secret police) post at Koran.**

teams sitting around the army base in the sunshine brewing up tea. Others were on escort duty for the long files of Afghan POWs trudging back toward Eskazer laden with the spoils of war. And the inventory of captured goodies was not bad: two 76mm howitzers, two 120mm mountain mortars, six 82mm mortars, four 12.7mm HMGs, 350 assault rifles, thousands of rounds of heavy weapons ammo, over a million rounds of small arms ammo; not to mention radio equipment, medical stores, food, blankets and other assorted junk . . . along with 29 corpses and 266 prisoners.

But amazingly, throughout all this, just across the river, Khad fought on. Isolated, doomed, surrounded and by mid-morning under heavy weapons fire from above, resistance sputtered on. It was a mopping-up operation that was at once utterly irrelevant and highly instructive: If every Khad unit in Afghanistan goes down like this one, Kabul '89 could end up looking a lot like Berlin '45.

Around midday, with all the officers killed, they called it quits. The house was stormed in a final rush as dazed Khad men emerged, hands held high. There followed scenes that Genghis Khan would have had no trouble identifying with as angry muj swept into the Khad offices, and filing cabinets, desks, chairs and other assorted furniture came crashing out through the windows. It says a lot for muj discipline (and a little for the presence of the Western press) that the Khad prisoners were not gunned down out of hand. It came close enough. Of the 25 muj casualties at Koran (14 KIA, 11 WIA) those who didn't die at Shakh went down around the Khad house.

As in 1982 for the Soviets, so in 1987 for the resistance, Monjan was an anticlimax. Two days later on 31 October the muj moved in to attack the 24th Regiment's 6th Battalion. Two companies promptly legged it for the nearest Soviet post, at Zebak. The third, and some 300 militia, surrendered.

At the time of this writing, supplies are once more moving through the twin valleys into the Panjshir and Badakhshan, leaving Massoud's forces in complete control of the Panjshir for the first time in nearly six years. This time you can lay money that DRA forces won't be coming back. ☒

# FACT, FANTASY AND FILM AT 11

## CBS News Wins One for Charlie at Cam Ne

by Craig Roberts

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*"War is a stupid and brutalizing affair. This type of war perhaps more than others. But this does not mean that those who are fighting it are either stupid or brutal. It does mean that the whole story should be told. Not just part of it."*  
*Marine Corps Gazette*  
1965, referring to Cam Ne

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**T**HE sun rose out of the South China Sea, casting rays of crimson above the peaks of the Hai Van mountains to the east. Climbing higher, it pushed the darkness to the west until the blackness of night finally surrendered to another day. Within an hour the Marines who waited patiently around the amtracks [armed, amphibious tracked vehicle] began to sweat. Like a blast furnace in hell, the heat would intensify until it took your breath away. Even the mere act of walking would drain a man of strength in minutes. Such was August in I Corps.

Finally word came. Marines mounted the huge green metal monsters while engines roared to life. Black smoke from the exhausts shot into the air, and the LVTs [landing vehicle tracked] turned toward the water's edge. One after another, they lurched and clanked into the muddy river. Twelve hundred meters up the Song Cau Do lay the objective, a village complex marked on the map as "Cam Ne."

The Phong Le bridge grew smaller as it faded into the shimmering heat waves. Soon, the amtracks rounded a bend in the river and the company of Marines knew that they were now in VC country. Ahead, on the south bank of the Cau Do, lay Cam Ne — and the Viet Cong.

The Marines expected the enemy. They expected the mines and booby traps. They expected tunnel complexes, bunkers and even a hostile population. But they did not expect what was about to happen that hot, steamy day of 3 August 1965. It would not be the guerrillas in black, elusive as they might be, who would pose the greatest threat to the men churning up river in the amphibious tractors. It would be the American news media — and two minutes of film — that would bring Cam Ne into living rooms across America. Two minutes of film that would attack the Marines more viciously than any Viet Cong.

Cam Ne, a village complex of six hamlets separated by a checkerboard of rice paddies, rested five miles south of Da Nang along the bank of a river delta where the Cau Do, Tuy Loan and Yen rivers came together. Long known as a Viet Cong stronghold, Cam Ne had communist connections dating back to the French Indochina war when it was a haven for the Viet Minh.

The sweep operation that was underway was not picked at random by the Marine Corps brass. As the amtracks crawled up the river bank 1,000 meters beyond Cam Ne, Company D, 1st Battalion, 9th Marines, commanded by Captain Herman B. West Jr., knew of the village's past. Today's

### TRUTH WILL OUT

Craig Roberts was a member of the 9th Marine Regiment from May 1965 to June 1966. He participated in three major campaigns in I Corps and served as an automatic rifleman in line companies, an adviser to the ARVN Rangers (Biet Dong Quan) and served on the sniper test program for the 3rd Marine Division. He was present during the incident described in the story, and participated in three separate search-and-destroy missions in the Cam Ne area.

Craig is currently an 18-year veteran police officer with the Tulsa Police Department, and an infantry major with the U.S. Army Reserve serving as the ground liaison officer attached to the 125th Tactical Fighter Squadron, Oklahoma Air National Guard, Tulsa, Oklahoma.

Craig is also a free-lance journalist, having written several magazine articles and one non-fiction book about Vietnam, *The Walking Dead*, which will be published by Pocket Books (Simon and Schuster), in November 1988. He is currently working on another non-fiction book concerning the history of the American sniper.



Author on Bridge Two, just east of Cam Ne. This steel bridge replaced French concrete bridge blown by Viet Cong before arrival of U.S. forces.

CBS reporter Morley Safer committed both media sins of omission and commission when covering Marine attack at Cam Ne, 3 August 1965. A vivid two minutes of footage showed him narrating the story while in the background a young Marine, apparently engaged in a fit of jungle savagery, casually set fire to the grass roof of a hut with a Zippo lighter. What Safer failed to point out was that the village concealed the entrance to a massive Viet Cong tunnel complex, and had been a known communist stronghold since the days of the Viet Minh during the French Indochina war. Also, some Marines on the operation said later that Safer had specifically asked the Marine to torch the hut behind him so he could get it on film. The result was a lasting impression on the home front that South Vietnamese civilians were helpless victims of unwarranted, wanton U.S. military aggression. Photo: AP/Wide World



sweep was ordered after a series of events that had begun on 12 July.

Twenty-two days earlier, on that July day, I stood cooking in the heat as I stared across the Cau Do toward our objective. As an automatic rifleman in Hotel Company, 2nd Battalion, 9th Marines, I looked forward to the day's activities with mixed feelings of excitement and apprehension. We were to cross the Phong Le bridge in force, wade 1,500 meters of waist-deep rice paddies and set up a blocking force for a clearing operation on the outskirts of the first village across the Da Nang (Cau Do) River. This would be our first combat operation since arriving in Vietnam two weeks before.

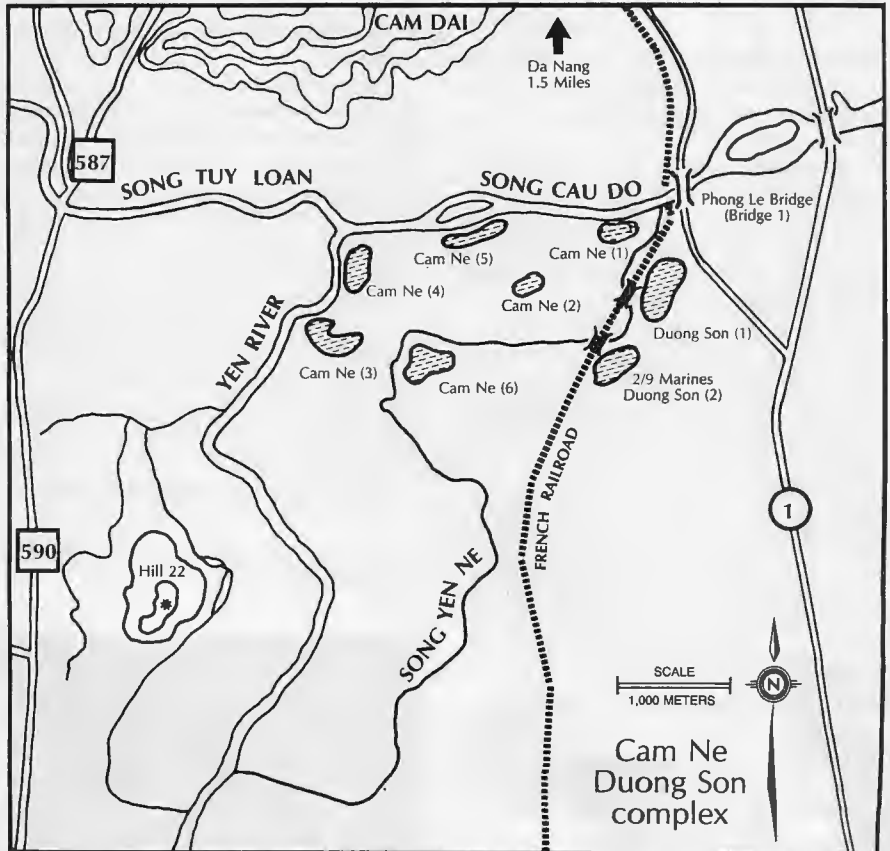
Wearing heavy flak jackets, packs and helmets, we made our way across the steel bridge and entered the muddy paddies. To our left, Bravo Company, 1st Battalion, formed a line and began advancing on Duong Son (1) (See map).

If there was any doubt about the sympathies of the inhabitants, it was soon dispelled.

Company B met strong resistance in the village. I could hear the familiar sound of M14s and the strange crack of the communist weapons as they exchanged fire. By the late afternoon, Bravo Company had secured the village — at the cost of three Marines killed and four wounded. When the Viet Cong disengaged, they withdrew to the northwest — to Cam Ne.

As the sweep of Duong Son progressed, Delta Company, 3rd Recon Battalion, working on the south side of the hamlet, came under fire from across the paddies. During the ensuing firefight, eight men were wounded. Looking at the map, the recon people could identify the enemy's position — Cam Ne.

The recon Marines pulled back and called for air support. The F-4B Phantoms of MAG-11 responded and soon had put "steel on target." Some rose from Cam Ne, and a Cessna 0-1 Bird Dog spotter plane made a



Author's platoon crossing paddies on way to sweep Cam Ne complex. Photo: DoD



Front cover of leaflet dropped at Cam Ne before sweep encouraging surrender and "Chieu Hoi" of Viet Cong. Photo: Craig Roberts

pass over the target area. The pilot confirmed six dead VC bodies still in plain view and secondary explosions in the vicinity, thought to be a mine field.

We occupied Duong Son and dug in to stay. The following two weeks would prove to us that the vast majority of enemy activity came from Cam Ne. Each night, we received incoming fire from the tree line that marked the hostile village across the paddies.

The Duong Son and Cam Ne complexes were a nest of Viet Cong activity. Twelve days prior, in the early morning hours of 1 July, a sapper team of 10 North Vietnamese soldiers from the 3rd Battalion, 18th NVA Regiment infiltrated Da Nang air base. Under cover of Viet Cong mortar fire, they succeeded in destroying an F-102 fighter and a C-130, and damaged two more F-102s and another Hercules. One NVA prisoner had been captured. They had come from the Cam Ne-Duong Son area and had crossed the Cau Do during the night of 30 June.

Two weeks later, we had taken Duong Son, but Cam Ne still remained in Viet Cong hands. To kill a snake, you have to cut off its head.

On 3 August, Operation Blastout I began. While the 1st Battalion, 3rd Marines and an ARVN battalion moved north along both banks of the Yen River toward Cam Ne to provide a blocking force, Delta Company's amtracks climbed out of the river and disgorged the sweating Marines. Once outside and organized, they advanced on line across the maze of rice paddies toward the source of our troubles.

Intelligence sources had reported that Cam Ne was occupied by a company of Viet Cong. It was known that the entire hamlet was a complex of tunnels, bunkers, booby traps, punji pits and spider holes. The Marines' orders were to overcome and destroy any position from which they received fire, whether it was from "a position,

hedgerow, trench line, bunker, spider trap or any other location."

At approximately 1015 hours, the company came under fire. One Marine was wounded as the troops struggled forward toward the tree line on the edge of the village. As the company pressed on, the Viet Cong withdrew farther into Cam Ne.

Entering the village, Delta Company found it impossible to keep on line, and the sweeping force began breaking up into small groups. Each worked their way forward through the maze of thorned bamboo tree lines and hedgerows in isolated fire teams. Foot traps, punji pits, booby traps and spider holes were everywhere. The village itself was ringed by a fighting trench, and each grass hooch sat near or over a bunker.

The LVTs followed the infantry into the village and crushed through hedgerows and bamboo tree lines, setting off several mines and booby traps.

The interconnecting tunnels and camouflaged firing positions favored the VC's hit-and-run tactics, and they used them to their advantage. As a squad searched a hut and moved on, the elusive guerrillas would pop up behind them, shoot at the Americans and disappear.

The combination of heat, harassing fire and slow movement frustrated the Marines. One platoon received automatic weapons fire from a grass-roofed hut and returned fire. Their assailant disappeared into the tunnels. Their orders were clear: The Marines began burning the huts that hid and protected the enemy.

A Marine helicopter banked over Cam Ne and landed in a cloud of swirling dust. Among its occupants were Major General Lewis W. Walt, commander of the III Marine Amphibious Force, and a CBS news team — the reporter was CBS correspondent Morley Safer.

Safer and his cameraman entered the vil-

**Deadly punji pits lay concealed around Cam Ne. Photo: DoD**



lage during the day and began filming the activities. By the time the film was edited for television, one scene would burn a lasting impression in the minds of the American people.

The scene was of a lone Marine setting fire to the grass roof of a hut with a Zippo lighter. Mr. Safer's dialogue, heard by millions of Americans, follows:

SCENE: Safer standing in front of smoking hut facing camera.

SAFER: "This is what the war in Vietnam is all about. The old and the very young. The Marines have burned this old couple's cottage because fire was coming from here."

"Now when you walk into the village, you see no young people at all. Fire was coming from . . . automatic . . . light automatic weapons fire was coming from all of these villages. It's not really one village, it's a string of huts . . . [scene changes — camera shows two Vietnamese women raking debris out of burned hut with rake] . . . and the people that are . . . are left . . . [turns to cameramen] come this way [unintelligible] . . . and the people that are left are like this woman here, the very old . . ."

SCENE CHANGE: Safer lying on ground talking to Marine in prone position.

SAFER: "Seen action like this before Marine?"

MARINE: "No I haven't. Not like this I



haven't."

SAFER: "Did you — uh — set fire to these houses here?"

MARINE: "No, we were just off to the left of it when it was burning.

SAFER: "Were you getting fire from them?"

MARINE: "Somewhat, not too much, just a little sniper fire."

SCENE CHANGE: Safer follows Marines through village. Camera shows scenes of Marines moving through smoking and burning huts, a flame thrower setting fire to a roof, civilians being directed out of village.

SAFER: "It had first appeared that the Marines had been sniped at and that a few houses were made to pay. Shortly after, an officer told me, he had orders to go in and level the string of hamlets that surrounds Cam Ne village. And all around the common paddy field that feeds these hamlets, a ring of fire. A hundred and fifty homes were leveled in retaliation for a burst of gunfire. In Vietnam, like everywhere else in Asia, property . . . a home . . . is everything. A man lives with his family on ancestral land. His parents are buried nearby. Their spirit is part of his holding. If there were Viet Cong in the hamlet, they were long gone. Alerted by the roar of amphibious tractors and the heavy barrage of rocket fire laid down before the troops moved in. The women and

**Marine enters opening to Viet Cong tunnel system, similar to massive tunnel system beneath village complex at Cam Ne. Photo: DoD**

the old men who remained will never forget that August afternoon." [Safer pauses to show crying women in group].

"The day's operation burned down 150 houses, wounded three women, killed one baby, wounded one Marine, and netted these four prisoners." [Camera shows four Vietnamese men with blindfolds being escorted by Marines]. "Four old men who could not answer questions put to them in English. Four old men who had no idea what an I.D. card was."

SCENE CHANGE: Close-up of Safer facing camera:

"Today's operation is the frustration of Vietnam in miniature. There is little doubt that American firepower can win a military victory here. But to a Vietnamese peasant whose home is a — that means a lifetime of back-breaking labor, it will take more than presidential promises to convince him that we are on his side."

[Pause]

"Morley Safer, CBS News, near the village of Cam Ne."

At the beginning of his presentation, Safer stated, "Fire was coming from . . . automatic . . . light automatic weapons fire was

coming from all of these villages."

He then contradicted his own statement later with, "It had first *appeared* that the Marines had been sniped at and that a few houses were made to pay."

What none of us understood or could comprehend in those early days of the war, was the Viet Cong's callous ability to use the civilian populace as a shield. The fighting men in the field in Vietnam rapidly learned this. The news media never did.

While this was going on, I watched from Duong Son (1) across the paddies. I could hear both Marine and Viet Cong weapons on several occasions as the sweep progressed. I could see columns of smoke rising above the village, but there had been *no heavy barrage of rocket fire* as Mr. Safer stated to all of America that night.

Safer stated, "The day's operation burned 150 houses . . ." According to Marine reports, 51 huts were destroyed. It appears that the news media was using an "inflated hooch count."

Could it be that Safer did not know of the air strike that was called in by the Recon Marines two weeks before?

By late afternoon on the 3rd, Capt. West's company had only progressed a quarter of the way through the complex. He realized that he didn't have the assets or

*Continued on page 82*



# PEACE THROUGH SUPERIOR FIREPOWER

## Guatemalan Military Targets Pacification in Fledgling Democracy

Text & Photos by Gene Scroft

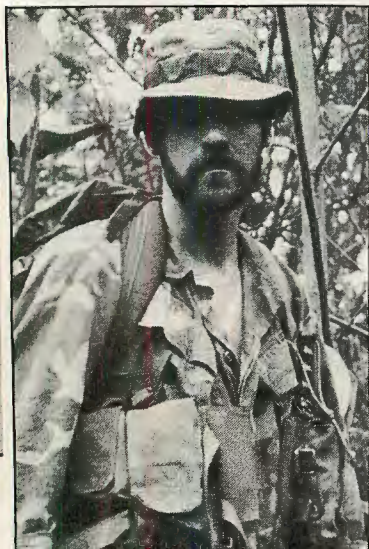
**W**E ignored the sound of gunfire — at first.

The Guatemalan soldiers in this isolated camp near the Mexican border, actually no

### WAR ZONE EXPERT

Gene Scroft, a West Point graduate who served in the 75th Rangers and 82nd Airborne before turning combat correspondent, has provided SOF with evaluations of the military strengths of countries as diverse as Lebanon, the Philippines, Israel, Afghanistan and all countries in Central America.

Gene Scroft — SOF's man in the field.



more than a one-bird landing zone carved into a jungle ridge, had standing orders to shoot at anything moving outside the perimeter. Since our only passive security was a string of rusty tin cans that we hoped would make noise if someone tried to infiltrate the position (the unit wasn't equipped with concertina wire or early-warning devices), the shoot-at-anything plan seemed reasonable. This caused everyone to become desensitized to the constant loud report of the soldiers' Galils. This time, however, something was different — we all sensed it. The first shot was answered by return fire that quickly escalated into a full-auto firefight on the other side of the camp.

When the firing started I was sitting with the battalion officers discussing the lack of G activity in the area. When we finally realized that we were under attack, the officers scrambled for their weapons while I grabbed my camera and ran barefoot toward the sound of the fire. Having just returned from a two-day patrol, I was stripped down to only my running shorts and a T-shirt. My fatigues were hanging out to dry after a much needed washing. The flanks of the camp were located in forested areas, but the bare LZ at its center had to be crossed to get to where the action was. I didn't know the exact location of the firefight, but the troops kneeling behind trees and crouching behind the parapets around the LZ didn't seem to be taking enemy fire. Feeling pretty exposed, I ran across the LZ to the other flank. When I reached the left perimeter, about 300 meters

### KNOW YOUR ENEMY

The Guatemalan insurgents, like most guerrilla movements in Central America, are represented by a loose confederation of competing, and often hostile, groups. In case you ever vacation in Guatemala, here is a list of the guys to watch out for.

- **Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity (UNGR)**

Umbrella organization representing the confederation of Guatemalan guerrilla groups but lacking any real control over their individual activities.

- **Workers Party of Guatemala (PGT)**

Outlawed Communist Party of Guatemala. Emphasized urban terrorist activities in the 1970s but was largely wiped out by the stern tactics of the dictators.

- **Revolutionary Armed Forces (FAR)**

Mainly located in the northern jungles. Relies mostly on road ambushes but is considered by the army to be ineffective.

- **Revolutionary Organization of Armed People (OPRA)**

Extremely dangerous group that emphasizes assassinations of major farm owners.

- **Guerrilla Army of the Poor (EGP)**

Largest of guerrilla groups. It gets most of its support among the Indian tribes, and controls sizable sections of real estate.



from the officer's area, it was clear that the commotion was on a hill outside the camp. I couldn't see shit from where I was, so I ran through the perimeter and headed toward the battle.

The ridge dropped quickly to a river that served as the camp's water supply and bath (unfortunately for hygiene, the bathing area was located upstream from the water collection point). The troops washing in the river at the time strangely ignored the firefight that raged all around them. I guess they figured that since their weapons were stacked in camp they might as well enjoy their bath. Halfway up the hill, troops providing security for the bathers were pumping rounds into the surrounding jungle. One of them was holding his arm in an unsuccessful attempt to stem the flow of blood pouring out of a nasty wound. I looked over my shoulder, and I could see the engaged men's platoon leaders running up the hill.

The difference leadership makes in any military organization was now demonstrated for me. Prior to the arrival of their lieutenants (Virgilio Gutierrez Vasquez and Mario Rodas), the troops were content to stay behind trees and return fire. There was never any thought of running away — the men are too good soldiers for that — but soldiers will seldom move forward unless they are led. In U.S. infantry jargon, soldiers don't "volunteer for noth'n," unless someone says "follow me." These lieutenants were clearly saying "follow me."

Lieutenant Vasquez grabbed an FN MAG gunner and told him to fire up the trail that

**Guatemalan army grenadier armed with M79 launcher pauses to check ahead before moving into dense foliage. Since the army does not have M203s, grenadiers carry Galil rifles for added protection.**

led to the top of the hill, while he, two soldiers and one journalist happily snapping pictures maneuvered up the hill.

I could immediately tell by the way they moved that these men had excellent training. One man would provide cover fire from a fixed position while the others rushed forward in short bounds. By leapfrogging in this manner, the distance to the objective, the top of the hill, was rapidly closed. Just like I was taught at Fort Benning, only this was for real. We were only about 10 meters from the top of the hill when I realized I wasn't doing much to help the tactical situation. I never carry a weapon on assignment (we don't want anyone calling me a nasty mercenary, do we?) but on this occasion a friend of mine who lives in Guatemala, Barry Sadler of "The Ballad of the Green Berets" fame, had given me a hand grenade that was supposed to get me "out of tight spots." Well, when I reached for the grenade, I remembered that the damn thing was in my LBE (load bearing equipment) back in the officers' area. I took one from a troop who didn't seem to be doing anything too important and asked Lieutenant Vasquez if he wanted me to use it to clear the top of the hill. He decided against the idea, fearing that some of his troops in this densely populated piece of jungle might be injured when

the grenade detonated. Of course, his caution was prudent, but a 10-meter assault against a position blasted away by a hand grenade would have been beautiful to behold. Slightly disappointed, I gave the grenade back to the soldier.

After securing the hill, we determined that all of the ruckus had been caused by a lone sniper, who fled after wounding a soldier with his .22 rifle. It really didn't matter; the reaction of the Guatemalans against an unknown number of enemy was superb.

The guerrilla war in Guatemala reached its peak in the early 1980s; when 6,000-7,000 rebels operated in the countryside. Today their number is down to around 1,000. The military felt the country secure

**Troops the world over enjoy *Soldier of Fortune* Magazine. Guatemalan soldiers are no exception.**



enough to voluntarily turn over power to an elected civilian government in 1986, the first civilian government in 15 years.

You have to go back to 1977 to understand the process that created Guatemala's successful counterinsurgency program. In that year the Carter administration drew up a list of reforms that the Guatemalan government (then under the control of General Fernando Romeo Lucas Garcia) had to institute before being granted additional military assistance from the United States. Garcia told the United States to stick it in its ear. While I'm not a big fan of the Carter administration, in this situation I believe the demands made by the United States were necessary. The increased use of terror tactics by the guerrillas had provoked a bloody response from right-wing groups like the *Mano Blanco* (White Hand) and the Secret Anti-Communist Army (ESA). The violence on the right was ignored, and in some cases supported, by the Lucas government. For the United States to give Guatemala military aid at this time would have linked us to an increasingly unpopular government, something that the history of American foreign policy has shown to be unwise.

Guatemala was now on its own. Realizing the gravity of the situation, the Guatemalan government instituted military reforms that proved highly successful. First and foremost, it recognized that it was fighting a guerrilla war against members of its own population and decided that it shouldn't waste time preparing soldiers for such unlikely events as an invasion from Mexico or an attack on Belize. Forced to be self-sufficient, the military purchased Galils from Israel, began to manufacture its own uniforms and personal equipment, and created a small-arms industry that produced 5.56mm ammunition and 60mm mortars.

A high priority was given to the building of roads into isolated areas in order to facilitate their economic growth and to provide access for military forces. To do this efficiently, all assets within the 19 military districts, both civilian and military, were

**Parrots worth hundreds of dollars in the United States fly free in Guatemala and are often kept as pets. Troop carries Israeli Galil.**



placed under the direct control of the districts' military commanders. If a commander wanted a road built or a health clinic started, all he had to do was order the appropriate agency in his district to comply. He was the boss; they couldn't say no.

The government established civil defense teams whose members were residents of the towns that they protected. The government realized that once a man made the decision to become a civil defense member he had decided to support the government. He could no longer sit on the fence and back whichever side happened to be in town. Civil defense volunteers are not paid in Guatemala, but because they protect the village they are held in high esteem by the population. The highly developed sense of community that exists in these isolated towns mitigates against abuses of authority by the civil defense members.

In the early '80s, all the major villages in the country were, and to a degree still are, color-coded. The color code indicates the degree of support for the government in each village or town. (I'm not privy to the actual colors used, so I'll use red, white and blue in this example). If the town was friendly to the government, it was colored blue; if neutral, supporting whichever side is in town at the time, it was white; an enemy village was red. Each type of village was approached differently.

In the case of a blue village, the army

entered as innocuously as possible and talked to the local leaders about any problems that they might be having. It insured that the civil defense forces were properly equipped and correctly carrying out their duties. When the army departed it left behind information pamphlets on such things as agricultural practices and health care techniques.

A white village was entered in force, with weapons ready. All the inhabitants were brought into the central plaza, and known and suspected communist supporters were made to stand in front of the assembly. The commander on the spot explained that the army knew who the troublemakers were, and if anti-government activities continued the suspects would be shot. He also made it very clear that the village was responsible for seeing that these men kept in line, and that if they didn't the whole village would be punished, that is destroyed. A curfew was usually imposed, and a small garrison left behind to develop a reliable civil defense force.

A red village was attacked. If the army was fired upon, the town was destroyed; if not, it was merely occupied. Again, all the inhabitants were assembled in the plaza, only this time the communist supporters were publicly executed. A large garrison remained behind to insure the security and the loyalty of the village. Tight population control measures, such as curfews and



**ABOVE: Kill!** The commander's dog (center) isn't overly impressed with bayonet training.

**BELOW: Where do I join?!** Two beauties in uniform armed with 9mm Beretta Model 12s at Playa Grande compound.



mistake of dissipating its forces in an impossible attempt to protect every inch of territory from the insurgents. The system isn't fast, but it's effective, and the Guatemalans are in no hurry. They're in the fight for the duration — a lesson we Americans should take to heart if our foreign policy initiatives are to succeed in the Third World.

I was anxious to see how the government's program worked in the field. When I was with the men of C Company on their isolated hillside, I wasn't able to see how the army worked with the population. I got my chance when I accompanied the 2nd Battalion of ZM 22 (Military Zone 22) at Playa Grande on part of its three-month field rotation along the Mexican border. (That's right sports fans; they spend three straight months in the field!)

My patrol experience began inauspiciously when I was rudely awakened by a Guatemalan soldier fiercely shaking my leg. "Christ," I thought, "what now?" Just the day before I had been forced to pay a private charter \$200 to fly me to Playa Grande, because my name was bounced from a "guaranteed" military flight. (A note to all you potential journalists and adventurers out there: Never go through official channels in any military organization if there are other means available to you. Worldwide officialdom consists of bureaucrats who it seems were created to cause you inconceivable frustration). Needless to say, I wasn't in the mood to be disturbed at 0-dark-30 in the morning.

Since I was sleeping in the enlisted men's quarters, I assumed that this was a case of mistaken identity, rousting me for guard duty or something. I told him that I was a journalist and rolled over to catch some more Zs.

"I know you are," answered a commanding voice. "We're going on patrol right now. Do you want to come?" My immediate response was "you bet," and I jumped out of my rack to pack my gear, which was scattered about under my bunk. OPSEC (operational security) is a serious matter to the Guatemalans, so I had no idea that a unit was going into the field. I was completely

**Lieutenant Colonel Romeo Ortiz, 2nd Battalion commander. Carrying his own rucksack, he walked everywhere with his troops.**



movement restrictions, were imposed.

This program provided both a carrot and a stick — a carrot in the form of government assistance and services and a stick in the form of death for any who take up arms against the government. The techniques have proven so effective that there are almost no red villages today, and white villages are found only in very remote areas. Simple, brutal and effective, it is a plan that should be viewed as a model for countries experiencing similar difficulties.

My ears are already burning with the shouts of people who will read this and decry the horrible denial of human rights implicit in this system. While any American, myself included, would raise holy hell if our government tried to impose anything like these restrictions on the people of this country, we are not at war among ourselves — Guatemala is. For a government in the throes of civil war to shun attempts to control popular unrest is not a sign of its democracy, but of its abdication.

The Guatemalans were intelligent enough not to try to secure the entire country simultaneously. Operations were conducted in the important agricultural and manufacturing areas of the country first and didn't move on until those regions were completely pacified. This policy allowed the government to mass its meager resources to overwhelm the enemy in one region at a time. The government didn't make the common



unprepared. The troops in the barracks must have had a great time watching the *gringo periodista* grope around in the dark trying to pack, dress, and fill canteens all at the same time..

The "troop" who shook my leg turned out to be Lieutenant Colonel Romeo Ortiz, commander of 2nd Battalion. When I finally got my gear together, he escorted me outside, where I was greeted by Colonel Jose Garcia, commander of ZM 22, and members of his staff there to see their men off. The battalion officers were busy inspecting equipment and camouflage of their soldiers, who quietly sat in two columns and waited to move out into the night. The professionalism of the Guatemalan army was

**Platoon leader communicates with his lead element en route to ambush.**



**Soldiers armed with Galils quickly move out against guerrilla recon team. Blue bandanas are used for unit identification. Gs have been known to infiltrate government positions wearing army uniforms. Note machete sheath taped to back of soldier's harness — an excellent place to carry it, as it does not interfere with a rucksack.**

apparent in the scene before me: senior officers up at 0300 to see their troops off, junior officers insuring that their men were ready for combat, and disciplined, prepared soldiers silently waiting for whatever came next. This is the way wars are won.

The Guatemalan government is building a road along the Mexican border that the Gs want closed. The communists operate out of refugee camps inside Mexico, and this road could ruin their whole day if completed. Our job was to kill any insurgents who tried to interfere with its construction. An interesting story about the Mexican camps was told to me by a man who was in a position to know the facts. I can't verify the story's validity, but it serves as a good example of how things are handled in Central America. When Lucas Garcia was president of Guatemala in the late 1970s, the Mexican government was covertly giving aid to Guatemalan insurgents operating out of Mexican territory (anything to cause a little trouble for the neighbors to the south). In response, Lucas organized and aided Mexican anti-government forces that operated out of Guatemala. The Mexicans were outraged and told him so. Lucas innocently replied that if a powerful country like Mex-

ico couldn't control insurgents operating out of its territory, how could little Guatemala stop Mexican guerrillas? The message was clear. Mexico quickly stopped giving aid to Guatemalan Gs, and Mexican insurgent activity evaporated on the southern border. A simple case of power politics Latin style.

Second Battalion's road movement out of Playa Grande was outstanding. Advance and flank units were sent out to secure against an ambush, and the soldiers kept good dispersion between individuals. Equally impressive was the fact the Colonel Ortiz was walking right with them and carrying his own rucksack — certainly not a given in other Central American armies. I was slightly disappointed, however, with the conditioning of the troops. The movement was over only about 15 klicks of gently rolling hills, but the men quickly wilted under the hot morning sun. When we reached our first objective, a small village along the road, one of the officers became sick, and one man had to be evacuated by helicopter for a serious case of heat stroke. Since this was the first long march after a couple of months at Playa Grande, the lack of conditioning was understandable, though with a better PT program it would have been avoidable. I'm sure that after several weeks of walking in the woods their performance improved.

Another practice that I question is the Guatemalans' habit of putting the first two or three men in a column in helmets and flak vests, even in thick jungle. Sure, these

**RIGHT: Machine gunner (center) with FN MAG 58 moves out toward enemy sniper. Troopers flanking him carry Galils.**

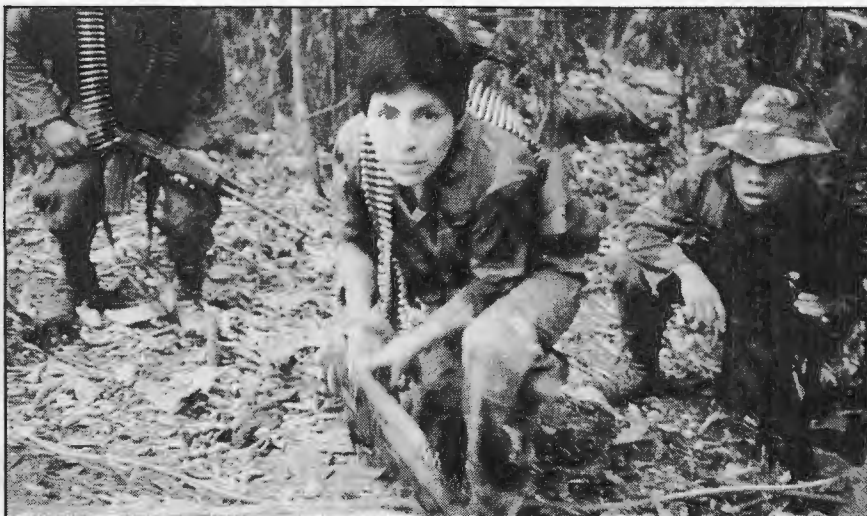
items provide the point element with some protection, but given a choice, I know that the men would decide to chuck the additional gear, especially in the heat of the day. Hell, I was travelling with the point element and never missed the "added protection" of a helmet and flak vest. These garments have their place in shrapnel-filled environments, but not in a low intensity guerrilla war where speed is of vital importance.

We were greeted by home defense forces in every village we entered. It was clear by the way people volunteered information about enemy activity that the population was firmly on the side of the government. In one village a man ran up to us, chest heaving, and explained that he had seen a guerrilla probing our position on the other side of the river. The army quickly organized a platoon and set out after him. I ended up with two young privates on the right flank. Though they were out of sight of any of their commanders, they aggressively moved forward anyway — great troops. Though no insurgents were found, the army's aggressive response and the civilian's effort to tell us what he saw indicated to me the government has the war well in hand.

Most of our time was spent in the villages talking to the people about their problems and about their government. The soldiers were very well-behaved and paid for everything they used. In one village a soccer game was organized between the army and the villagers. The villagers kicked our butts, but everyone had a great time. Colonel Ortiz told me that these villages had benefited from Rios Montt's "rifles and beans" campaign. (Montt took over the government in a 1982 coup against Lucas. Montt himself was overthrown in 1983, largely because of his fanatic evangelical beliefs. In 1986 the new military rulers turned power over to an elected civilian government that still rules as of this writing.) The right-wing killings that were rampant under Lucas were brought under control by Montt, and the military reforms begun under Lucas' brother and defense minister, Benidicto Lucas, were expanded. Once the army had secured an area, the rifles and beans program provided devastated villages with free food and building supplies to get them back on their feet — and weapons and training for the villages' home defense units. When the villagers, mostly indigenous Indian peoples, saw that the army wasn't out to kill them as the guerrillas propagandized, they readily took up arms to defend themselves against communist encroachments.

While most of our time was spent inside the villages, we did conduct an ambush along the Xalbal River, a major infiltration route for Gs coming out of Mexico. We moved to the river and conducted a recon along its open, sandy banks. Interestingly,

*Continued on page 86*



## SOF TAKES TASS TO TASK

The Guatemalan armed forces public affairs office had been stonewalling my request to accompany one of their units in the field for over a month. Finally, failing in a frontal assault, I decided to make a flank attack through the president's office.

Central American time being what it is, I expected at least a week's wait for an appointment with the presidential spokesman, Señor Liceniado Julio Santos. I was caught completely off guard when I was granted an immediate audience. Angry stares from officials who had been waiting for weeks to see the spokesman burned holes in the back of my head as I strode into his office. Sorry boys, some guys have it, and some don't.

I was warmly greeted by Sr. Santos, a rather distinguished gentleman with an air of Spanish aristocracy about him. Two slavish-looking men were also sitting in his office. Señor Santos introduced them as representatives of TASS (the official Soviet news agency). They had come up from their headquarters in Managua (where else?) to report on the situation in Guatemala, and judging by their pale complexions and brand-new guyabara shirts, they were new to the region. I quickly glanced at Sr. Santos. He wasn't openly smiling, but the twinkle in his eye betrayed that he was covertly laughing like hell. Now I understood why I received such a speedy meeting. Santos was well aware of SOF's political philosophy and our intense dislike for the Soviets and their system; he just couldn't pass up the opportunity to witness a confrontation between these two implacable enemies.

After shaking hands with the communists, I explained to Sr. Santos what I wanted to do with the army. As the conversation progressed, I was asked about the situations in some of the other countries that I had visited. Not one to miss a

cue, I explained that the situation in such places as the Philippines and Afghanistan was increasingly stable due to the fact that the Soviets had decided to limit their interference in those countries' internal affairs. For the benefit of our guests, I used every opportunity to stress how the forces of totalitarian communism were giving way to democratic development. There was no reaction from the peanut gallery, but Santos, now grinning from ear to ear, was eating it up.

I was carrying a portfolio of my articles and suggested to the comrades that they might be interested in the story about Afghanistan. On the mention of that country, the two TASS errand boys immediately perked up. One of them proudly explained that he was also a "journalist" in Afghanistan. (I place the word journalist in quotes, because anyone working for a government propaganda organ like TASS is straining credulity when they claim to be journalists.) I told him that was really impressive, but I explained that my tour in Afghanistan wasn't journalistic. I was there fighting with the mujahideen against his country's occupation of that land. The article was written after the fact for hard cash a year before I was hired as a reporter by SOF magazine. I also expressed surprise that he didn't know about it, since *Pravda*, the party newspaper, had written an article denouncing my participation in the war shortly after my story appeared. Both functionaries were now on the edge of their seats as they leafed through the article describing how we had killed a number of their patriotic soldiers in attacks against outposts and convoys in the Herat area.

Santos, probably out of gratitude for the show that I put on for him, granted my request for a letter recommending that I be allowed to join a patrol of the Guatemalan army. After thanking Sr. Santos for his help, I retrieved my portfolio from the stupefied Bolsheviks and took my leave.

# 82ND AIRBORNE'S URGENT FURY

## *All-Americans Kick Ass and Take Names on Grenada*

by Mark Adkin

*Last month, we reviewed the role played by special operations personnel, particularly the Rangers, in securing drop and landing zones on Grenada during Operation Urgent Fury, and their actions against Cuban, Peoples Revolutionary Army (PRA) and militia*

*troops on the first day of the hastily planned invasion designed to ensure the safety of American medical students in Grenada after the assassination of Prime Minister Maurice Bishop in October 1983. This month, we examine the role of the 82nd Airborne Divi-*

### EYEWITNESS ACCOUNT

At the time of the October 1983 multinational intervention in Grenada, Major Mark Adkin was serving as a contract staff officer with the Barbados Defense Force and participated in Operation Urgent Fury. Leaving Barbados for England in 1987, Major Adkin began work on his book, *Urgent Fury*, to be published by Lexington Books next spring, from which this series is extracted. Major Adkin is now retired, having logged some 31 years in Her Majesty's service.



sion, which was originally scheduled to relieve special ops personnel on the second day.

"Keep sending battalions until I tell you to stop" — Major General Edward Trobaugh, commander of 82nd Airborne Division and Task Force 121, at 1520 hours at Point Salines in a radio conversation with his HQ.

**D**URING the planning process, there had been confusion over the arrival time in Grenada of 82nd Airborne's leading elements. It was well understood they should be on the ground by H-plus-four hours, that is about 0930. However, for some reason this was changed by Atlantic Command to a departure from Pope Air Force Base at H-plus-four giving, with a five-hour flight, an arrival time of H-plus-nine. This was much too late for a rapid takeover from the special ops forces, even if this had been possible. Similarly, it meant the Caribbean Peacekeeping Force (CPF) units would arrive before, rather than after, the 82nd.

None of the contingents in the CPF knew what to expect on arrival, or more importantly, what

their mission was, except for rather vague peacekeeping duties. They went prepared to fight, but they were not under command of the Americans. U.S. troops were not briefed on their participation; the U.S. high command had not included them in their planning and had told them nothing about D-Day objectives of U.S. forces. As Admiral Wesley McDonald, Comander-in-Chief Atlantic, was to admit in his official report to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, three months later:

"During preliminary and final planning, the control of the CPF was not coordinated with CJTF 120 (Vice Admiral Metcalf, Commander Second Fleet and Commander Joint Task Force 120) creating early confusion on the planning for inserting the CPF."

Brigadier Rudyard Lewis, who was double hatted as chief of staff of the Barbados Defense Force and Regional Security Coordinator, was to have been the Caribbean

**On patrol with vehicle-mounted M60 near Salines Airport. Security of the airport at Salines was considered critical. Photo: AP/Wide World**







Captain Blatti, operations officer, 1st/505th PIR, 82nd Airborne, coordinates helicopter flights to LZs in search operation for Cubans on Grenada. Communication between Army, Navy, Marine and Air Force units was difficult and hampered efficiency on some operations. Photo: Jim Graves

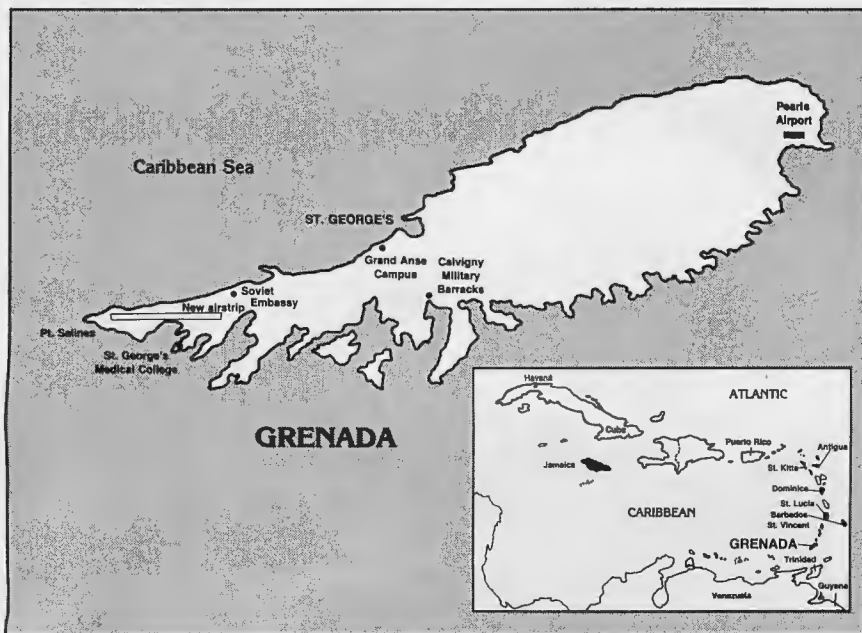
Lewis agreed, in discussion with Major General George Crist, USMC, who accompanied the CPF as senior liaison officer, and General Scholtes, who commanded TF 123 with the Special Forces, that he should relieve the 2nd/75th Rangers of responsibility for prisoners.

By nightfall, some 250 captives, including 10-12 PRA, had been rounded up and the Cuban barracks ransacked. The accommodation in "Old" Camp was ankle deep in litter.

At five minutes past two in the afternoon the first C-141 Starlifter bringing 82nd Airborne troops touched down at Salines. Out stepped Major General Trobaugh, accompanied by his forward headquarters staff and A Company, 2nd/325th.

The previous 36 hours had been frustrating for Trobaugh. His mission had been changed to one of mopping up and law and order duties. Like other commanders, his information on Grenada was sketchy. He was supposed to take over from the Special Forces and Rangers early on D-Day, but his delayed departure had made that impossible. Then he had an annoying argument with the MAC staff over the 12 Starlifters assigned to carry his units. They all arrived rigged to land at Salines, whereas Trobaugh wanted the parachute option. Eventually he prevailed, and the aircraft were rigged for a drop. Also worrying was his position in the command set up. He was commander of TF 121, but the plan involved two other task forces operating on the ground in Grenada — JTF 123 under Scholtes, plus TF 124 under Captain Carl Erie, with the Marines ashore in the north. There was no ground force commander as such, and Trobaugh rightly foresaw coordination problems ahead. Indeed, these difficulties were exacerbated by poor to nonexistent direct radio communications between the 82nd Airborne, the Marines, and Metcalf on the *Guam*. Eventually a special Army communications team had to be set up aboard the *Guam* to try to resolve this situation.

The divisional plan had envisaged deployment to Grenada in two phases, an assault echelon and a follow-on echelon. The assault units consisted of the divisional forward command post (CP), the forward command post of 2nd Brigade with two infantry battalions under Colonel Stephen Silvasy; two field artillery batteries, an engineer platoon, a military police platoon, and four Stinger teams from 3rd/4th Air Defense Artillery Regiment (ADA). This grouping was usually referred to as "a combat slice." The battalions were the 2nd/325th under Lieutenant Colonel Jack Hamilton and the 3rd/325th under Lieutenant Colonel John Raines. Each artillery bat-



representative with Metcalf on the USS *Guam*. Colonel Ken Barnes of the Jamaica Defense Force (JDF) would command the CPF on the ground.

So Lewis went in the next day on the first available C-130. In his own words, "We went in completely blind." Nobody had even bothered to tell him the code name of the operation — *Urgent Fury*.

Arriving mid-morning were 300 West Indian troops and paramilitary police. Jamaica provided an infantry company, Barbados a strongly reinforced platoon of some 50 men, Antigua and Barbuda a

Island paradise of Grenada, which in a few short years of self rule within the British Commonwealth had been subjected to a Marxist reign of terror and was being built into a steppingstone for communist expansion in the Caribbean.

squad, while Dominica, St. Lucis, and St. Kitts contributed detachments of armed police Special Service Units (SSUs). A group from St. Vincent arrived the following day, along with a larger contingent of Barbadian policemen. All Caribbean personnel wore blue armbands to distinguish them from the Grenadian PRA.

tery had six 105mm howitzers. The follow-on echelon was Colonel Terry Scott's forward CP from 3rd Brigade, with Lieutenant Colonel George Crocker's 1st/505th and Lieutenant Colonel Shaw's 1st/508th, plus another artillery battery. These units were to deploy "light," with only a few vehicles per battalion, manpacking most of their equipment. As with the Rangers, this meant the troopers were frequently overloaded. The infantrymen on Grenada were slow moving, suffered from heat exhaustion and were unable to climb hills quickly. None felt the weight of their equipment more than the radio operators and Stinger teams. A Stinger crew member carried about 110 pounds, which made it impossible for them to keep up with their units off the tracks. Although no air threat ever materialized, no less than 27 Stinger teams deployed to Grenada by the end of October. As they had few vehicles, resupply would have been a major problem had they actually fired.

When Trobaugh had taken off at 1007 hours it was uncertain whether he would jump or land. He was not in the picture as to what was happening at Salines, so during the flight he tried to listen in on Scholtes' radio net. Communications were difficult, so he learned little. However, after 2½ hours, it was confirmed that Salines had been secured. That did not necessarily mean it was safe to land the Starlifters on the unfinished runway, the western end of which was still only surfaced with gravel and oil. To check this out was the task of Brigadier Robert Patterson, USAF, vice commander, 21st Air Force, MAC, from McGuire AFB. Patterson, a highly decorated officer with almost 300 combat flying hours, landed from Barbados in a C-130 at 1130. He gave the go-ahead for daylight landings, and Air Force Combat Control Teams set up lighting facilities for night landings.

Shortly before Trobaugh's aircraft touched down, Captain Clyde Newman, commanding B Company, 1st/75th Rangers, decided that something must be done to rescue two wounded Ranger scouts. Collecting some Cuban prisoners and a Spanish-speaking Ranger, Newman, holding a bull-horn, slowly advanced toward Little Havana with the Cuban construction workers in front. He called out to the Cubans to surrender, whereupon two came forward with their weapons above their heads. First Sergeant Cayton advanced to the compound, where he found about 150 Cubans apparently willing to give up. He also discovered two dead and 23 wounded. Cayton continued to negotiate, and shortly before 1500 he was able to escort out the wounded plus about 70 prisoners. The remaining 80 had decided to fight on. While at the compound, he was able to destroy several heavy weapons, including mortars and recoilless rifles. This initiative from B Company was a serious blow to the Cubans' ability to resist.

At that time Trobaugh was unaware of this success. After disembarking, he had



82nd Airborne detailed with security of Salines Airport, Grenada, 25 October 1983. Photo: DoD

expressed his surprise at finding Ranger LTC Hagler with his CP still only 20 meters from the runway. He jumped on a Cuban dump truck and was driven to meet Scholtes at his headquarters west of the terminal. The picture painted was far from rosy.

The original plan called for the Rangers and Special Forces to leave Grenada on the 25th, but Trobaugh was rapidly disabused of any such possibility. Salines had been secured; the students at True Blue were safe, and the Marines had Pearls. These

were the pluses. The debit side was longer. Resistance had been heavier than expected. The Cubans and PRA were still fighting, and there was another campus at Grand Anse full of students waiting to be rescued. And there was no way the two under-strength Ranger battalions could secure Camp Calivigny as planned. But the worst news concerned the rough handling given to the Special Forces in operations around St. George's. Trobaugh learned of the failed attack on Richmond Hill Prison, the successful PRA counterattack at Beausejour, and the fact that the SEALs had not secured the Governor General, but rather that they,

and he, were under seige. He felt fully justified in sending the quoted message for reinforcements. His request was relayed upward to Washington, where a worried Secretary of Defense Weinberger eventually agreed. Within three days no fewer than six battalions of the 82nd were sent to Grenada.

The defense of Salines was stronger than anticipated; it set back the U.S. invasion timetable. Resistance slowed down the whole schedule of the intervention; after D-Day the Americans became more uncertain, more cautious, and slow to move out of the Salines area because of the concern for the security of the airhead and the large number of enemy unaccounted for.

By late afternoon, Trobaugh had three infantry battalions at Salines. Both the 1st/75th and 2nd/75th Rangers were to come under his command, allowing Scholtes to extract his Special Forces and go home once the debacle at Government House had been resolved. Trobaugh also had Hamilton's 2nd/325th. The remainder of this battalion had arrived before nightfall, but Raines' 3rd/325th had been diverted to Barbados when attempts to provide sufficient runway lighting failed. At Grantley Adams airport 3rd/325th transferred to C-130s and, together with three 105mm guns, arrived in Grenada at 0246 on the 26th.

Metcalf had decided that the Ranger battalions should switch to CTF 121 (Trobaugh) at 1900 that evening, but although Trobaugh knew this, 2nd Battalion's LTC Hagler was not told until 3½ hours later, and 1st Battalion's LTC Taylor knew nothing about it until 0630 the next morning. At a crucial time, when planning and coordination for continuing operations should have been in progress, nothing was happening. Command and control fell victim to confusion. Trobaugh was aware that some Marines had landed on the coast north of St. George's at 1900, but he was not the ground force commander, and his communications with the Marines were nonexistent. Equally frustrating was the fact that, although he could see the *USS Guam* on the horizon, more often than not he was unable to speak to Metcalf. The Army CP and the Admiral commanding were in direct line of sight only a few miles apart, yet radio contact was impossible, except occasionally via a satellite. Trobaugh confined himself to assessing his own situation.

It was some relief when Raines arrived with his battalion, plus a troop of howitzers, in the early hours of the morning. With a brigade of two battalions now available, Trobaugh gave orders to Colonel Silvasy. Hamilton, with 2nd/325th, was to move through the Ranger positions and push north as far as Morne Rouge and Frequente, while Raines with 3rd/325th was to clear the True Blue peninsula. An advance of 1,500 meters was contemplated, with the 2nd/325th having to deal with the remaining Cubans at Little Havana. If things went well, it might be possible to reach the Lime and Grand Anse campus.

In the south there were only two weak



Troops of the 82nd Airborne disembark at Point Salines airport to relieve advance special operations personnel and continue mopping-up operations. Photo: Alan J. Oxley

Ranger battalions along with 300 Caribbean soldiers and policemen, and the 82nd Airborne could not start arriving until late afternoon.

The 82nd Airborne eventually had six infantry battalions in Grenada, but only suffered two deaths by enemy action. Both of these were men from the same battalion, Hamilton's 2nd/325th, and both were from B Company. One was the company commander, Captain Michael Ritz, who was shot at night during a reconnaissance in front of the Cuban positions. The other was a squad leader, Staff Sergeant Gary Epps, who was killed on the morning of the 26th when a recoilless rifle he was attempting to unload exploded. Ten months later Major General Trobaugh, accompanied by Colonel Silvasy, the brigade commander, was to be the reviewing officer at a dedication

ceremony at Fort Bragg when the plaque naming the Ritz-Epps Sports Complex was unveiled. As it turned out, B Company's attack to secure the Cuban headquarters at Little Havana early that day was the only combat action the division was required to undertake.

At dawn that morning Trobaugh's intention was to use the 2nd/325th and 3rd/325th to expand the tiny foothold that had been seized by the Rangers in the southwest corner of the island. The two Ranger battalions would be a quick reaction reserve force, with the three 105mm guns that had arrived being available for support from Salines. The artillery gun position was initially south of the runway, but with all the potential targets north of the strip this was highly dangerous to the scores of aircraft using it. This error was rectified, with the guns being deployed north of the runway on the open ground immediately east of the terminal buildings.

It was disappointing that no further reinforcements had arrived as hoped. As early



as 0230 on the 26th Secretary of Defense Weinberger had approved two more battalions, followed later by another two, but none were destined to reach Grenada that day, although Colonel Terry Scott's 3rd Brigade with 1st/505th took off from Pope AFB at 1007 hours. Apart from brigade HQ and a small element of Crocker's 1st/505th, none reached Grenada until the 27th.

The delay was primarily due to aircraft congestion on the ground, as well as radio communication and other problems. Brigadier Patterson, with a staff of five, had set up his headquarters in Barbados, but the sheer number of flights compounded the other difficulties, preventing his being able to control the flow. The end result was that aircraft were often stacked up, circling round and round over the island, waiting for the runway to clear. Unloading ramps did not exist, so getting planes turned around was a slow, laborious, process. Frequently flights had to be diverted to Barbados, low on fuel. Such was the fate of Colonel Scott's battalion from the 3rd Brigade on the 26th.

All these problems were unknown to Captain Ritz as he contemplated his mission, due to start at daylight. His company had been detailed by Hamilton to assault the Cuban compound from its present location on the fuel tank hill to the west, while A Company would have fire support from the Calliste hills to the east. C Company would be in reserve (C Company was actually B Company, 2nd/505th which was attached to the 2nd/325th. Hamilton "designated" B Company, 2nd/505th as his "C" Company). After taking Little Havana, B Company was to push up onto the Morne Rouge high ground and possibly, on order, reach the Grand Anse campus.

Ritz decided to take out a platoon leader's reconnaissance patrol at 0430, while it was still dark, in order to explore the approach to the enemy position along the ridgeline that overlooked it from the west. This ridge was only 250 meters from the Cubans in the valley, and there was every likelihood that more were occupying the ridge itself. The patrol consisted of the company command-

er, Second Lieutenant Stephen Seager and Sergeant Terry Guinn. They moved cautiously forward through the long grass and dense scrub that covered the ridge. In the blackness it was difficult not to make a noise as boots crunched on twigs or scraped bushes. They were a considerable distance from their own lines, descending a saddle northwest of the compound, when they bumped the Cubans. Bursts of close range machine-gun and rifle fire hit them. Ritz was killed at once. Guinn collapsed badly wounded, while Seager flung himself down unscathed and started crawling and firing to distract attention from his fallen comrades. By 0530, however, Seager's platoon had advanced sufficiently to drive the Cubans down into the compound, so that Guinn could be rescued.

It was a depressing start for B Company to have lost its commander and a platoon leader so early. Things looked difficult for a while after the advance began, as the company came under intense small arms fire from enemy positions that were hard to pinpoint in the grass and bushes. A number of men in the leading platoons were wounded, so no attempt was made to assault the Cuban compound until after it had received a severe pounding by A Company's machine guns and mortars, the guns at Salines and naval gunfire from ships at sea. Numerous strafing runs by A-7 Corsairs were called in to hit the unmistakable cluster of buildings in the valley, which were still flying a large Cuban flag that served as a convenient identification marker for the pilots.

The bombardment soon produced results.

A platoon advanced down the slope to accept the surrender of 86 Cubans. Sixteen dead were discovered in the ruins or nearby. Although the Americans could not know it, it was the end of Cuban resistance to the invasion.

During the afternoon, the 2nd/325th inched forward on foot. B Company hauled themselves and their heavy packs to the top of Morne Rouge, while C Company moved eastward as far as the now-deserted supply base at Frequente. Here they found a veritable Aladdin's Cave of weapons and ammunition in the warehouses, which the PRA logistics chief, Fraser, had been unable to move.

Back at Salines, the 82nd was in the process of taking over the area, including POWs, from the CPF. At around midday CPF witnesses were amused to watch an 82nd Airborne colonel administering a tremendous dressing down to a humble master sergeant wearing his paratroopers' red beret. The Sergeant had arrived in a jeep feeling very pleased with himself. Tied up in the back of the vehicle were three prisoners in civilian clothes. He thought he had done well when he pulled his captives out of the jeep, protesting vehemently. The colonel disagreed, as his prisoners were Russians; none other than the number two at their embassy, an intelligence officer with a mouth full of steel teeth, and their driver. Diplomatic immunity secured their immedi-



ate release, while the colonel berated the unfortunate sergeant for his initiative and for wearing his beret rather than his helmet. Those watching were uncertain which "crime" the colonel considered the most serious.

In terms of missions accomplished, the 26th had been a successful day. The Cubans had surrendered at Little Havana, and the Governor General had finally been rescued. The PRA logistics base had fallen, and more than 230 civilians had been evacuated from Grand Anse. All this at a cost of two men killed plus 11 wounded in action. In the north, the Marines' E Company, 2nd/8th Battalion Landing Team had spent the day collecting arms caches around Pearls, while in the extreme south Raines' 3rd/325th had uneventfully occupied the True Blue peninsula. No further infantry battalions had arrived, and that night TF 121's front line stretched from Morne Rouge in the west, southeastward through Frequente to the True Blue peninsula.

TF 121 seemed preoccupied with the need to secure every inch of ground before making any substantial advance.

Trobaugh's orders for the 27th reflect the innate slowness of his operations. He did not believe he could get to Calivigny until the 28th, even though during the early morning hours of the 27th his Combat Aviation Battalion, which had arrived in Barbados in C-5A Galaxies on the 26th, began flying into Grenada. By dawn on Thursday, many of the Black Hawks had arrived. It was at this time also that the three medevac Black Hawks of the 57th Medical Detachment of XVIII Airborne Corps flew in, one being sent to Pearls, the other two staying at Salines. The main problem was fuel. It was discovered that the 10,000-gallon fuel bladder at Salines was empty, so many of the aircraft had to be used to ferry small, 500 gallon bladders to and from the *Guam*.

Trobaugh's orders were that 2nd Bri-

**Member of Caribbean Peacekeeping Force with SLR stands guard over suspects during early mopping-up stages. Processing of prisoners was jointly handled by members of the CPF and the 82nd. Photo: Alan J. Oxley**

gade, with the 2nd/325th and 3rd/325th, push forward to the Golflands and Woodlands Estate area, about a kilometer south of St. George's. Scott's 3rd Brigade only consisted of a few elements of the 1st/505th, but as they were reinforced during the next day they were to search and secure the Lance aux Epines peninsula.

Shortly after first light on Thursday the 27th, long columns of infantry from the 82nd slowly uncoiled themselves from their overnight locations. The temperature rose, and the troops were sweating profusely and somewhat apprehensive as to what the day would bring. On the left, Hamilton's 2nd/325th led the way down from the Morne Rouge high ground to the coastal flat land behind Grand Anse beach. By 0920, the 2nd/325th entered the burned-out remains of the old Police Training College at Grand Anse. There was no opposition.

To the south, over on the other side of Morne Rouge ridge, Raines' 3rd/325th began to move forward slowly, ever so slowly, down the road from Frequente, past the drive-in cinema toward Ruth Howard, the Sugar Mill, and eventually the Woodlands Estate area. The scout platoon was in the lead, and it was a very long time before the last troops in the battalion were able to move out. There was a lot of stopping and starting and much bunching up. Resistance was limited to occasional sniper fire; nothing serious. The 3rd/325th was advancing along the boundary between their 2nd Brigade and 3rd Brigade on the right.

Lieutenant Colonel George Crocker's 1st/505th had a late start, holding at their line of departure until the 3rd/325th could

cross their front. His was the only infantry battalion of Colonel Scott's 3rd Brigade in Grenada that morning, and their task was to secure the high ground overlooking Grand Anse Estate before exploring the Lance aux Epines peninsula. During their advance, B Company was fired upon by automatic weapons, and within 30 minutes they maneuvered to kill one and capture four.

A relatively quiet start to the morning, but the afternoon was to be a disaster.

It is puzzling why the JCS considered it so essential to assault Calivigny after the Rangers had been unable to get there on D-Day. By this time it had no tactical or strategic importance left. Calivigny was to the PRA what Fort Bragg is to the 82nd Airborne.

As we now know, all PRA troops moved out of the camp on 23 October, as soon as invasion seemed imminent. With reflection, this should have been apparent to planners or their intelligence staffs, but seemingly it was not, because a full-scale battalion attack was ordered.

Trobaugh detailed Hagler's battalion for the mission — it had been his originally anyway — reinforced by C Company of the 1st/75th, now recovered from their Richmond Hill Prison setback and returned to their battalion. To these Rangers the prospect of yet another difficult task caused a few misgivings initially. It seemed to some that the Rangers were doing all the fighting and that they had done their fair share. They had, after all, been led to believe they would be pulled out at the end of the first day.

At 1600 hours, 17 guns from the three batteries of the 1st/319th and 1st/320th Field Artillery opened fire from Salines.

At the same time, the leading troops of the scout platoon of Raines' 3rd/325th were approaching the Ruth Howard/Sugar Mill road junction, having advanced one kilometer since the start early that morning. Suddenly they came under fire from a sniper located behind them and to their left, north of the road.

While three battalions of the 82nd gingerly moved northeast and east toward the town of Lance aux Epines, two companies of Marines undertook the task of securing the city, together with possible PRA positions along the Morne Jaloux ridge.

By nightfall Trobaugh had been reinforced by the second battalion of the 3rd Brigade. This was Lieutenant Colonel Hugh Shaw's 1st/508th. Much to its annoyance, this battalion was destined to take no part in any operations, being given the task of security at Salines, despite the fact that there were still two more battalions to arrive, both of whom would be involved in mopping up over the next few days. On the ground a kilometer still separated the Marines at Ross Point from the nearest 82nd battalion (2nd/325th) just to the north of Grand Anse. Raines' men had halted north of the Sugar Mill, while Crocker was on the high ground north of Lance aux Epines peninsula, which had not yet been secured. Apart from some random sniper fire, mostly against the 3rd/

325th in the center, there had been no enemy interference with progress.

The explanation is to be found in a number of factors. Firstly, Trobaugh was not pushing, not driving his units forward, seemingly being content to expand his bridghead around Salines gradually and seeing no reason to speed things up. True, his communications with the *Guam* were erratic, but he could have flown out to the ship in a few minutes if need be, if he was unsure of what to do. Then, like the other commanders, Trobaugh just could not bring himself to believe it was all over, and indeed had been so for at least 24 hours. Reports and rumors of Cubans still ensured extreme caution. The lack of actual resistance and the cooperative friendliness of Grenadians was not interpreted correctly.

*[Other sources involved in Urgent Fury differ with Major Adkin's interpretation of the slow progress made by the 82nd. They state: "Numerous U.S. citizens had to be evacuated, and hundreds of weapons captured, consolidated and evacuated. Several hundred houses were searched and cleared — a slow and tedious process — and hundreds of refugees were controlled and processed. Many PRA suspects were apprehended and processed as POWs. Population control measures were also established to control heavy looting by local Grenadians. The idea was not to run across the island." These sources also state that Trobaugh did in fact fly out to the Guam.]*

But this was not quite all. Researchers from Walter Reed Army Institute of Research prepared a report, which was published in early 1987 in the *Military Review*, on the overloading of infantry troops on Grenada. The joint authors were Major James Dubik, a Ranger officer, and Major Terrence Fullerton, a psychologist at the Walter Reed Army Medical Center. Their report was based on interviews with personnel of several of the nine battalions that participated in *Urgent Fury*, many taking place on the island shortly after combat.

Not only were the majority of the infantry without their vehicles for most of the first few days, but they were not acclimatized to the heat. Their uniforms were not tropical issue, and the hills were steep, if not particularly high. On top of this many soldiers were heavily overburdened. As the report states, 29 soldiers of one battalion collapsed with heat exhaustion in a day. Another battalion's aid post treated 48 heat casualties, while a third used up their entire supply of intravenous solution on heat cases. The hills and the heat were as effective as enemy action in causing losses.

Regarding the actual weight carried and its effect, the report gives some revealing examples. One soldier recalled:

"We attacked to secure the airhead. We were like slow moving turtles. My rucksack weighted 120 pounds. I would get up and rush for 10 yards, throw myself down and couldn't get up. I'd rest for 10 or 15 minutes, struggle to get up, go 10 more yards and collapse. After a few rushes, I was

physically unable to move, and I'm in great shape. Finally after I got to the assembly area, I chucked my rucksack and was able to fight, but I was totally drained."

Then another said:

"I thought the rucksacks we were taking had too much in them . . . It proved out when we got down there . . . There were all those guys sitting on the side of the road with IV tubes in them. There's no way the guys could do it. We got most of those heat casualties walking up that one hill."

Finally, after describing how his unit had to sit halfway up a hill waiting for the remainder to struggle up, one soldier added, "Even the commanding officer fell out of

that one. He was dead tired; he also lost all of his radio-telephone operators."

A glance at the photograph of some 82nd troopers resting beside a track confirms that these descriptions of exhaustion were not exaggerations. The cause of this overloading was uncertainty — uncertainty back in the United States during preparations for the operation. Commanders had meager information on the enemy, the terrain, even on their own role and objectives. The result was that, with some exceptions, they overloaded their men — just in case. Perhaps the most damning comment of all made by the

*Continued on page 100*

**Smiling troopers from the 82nd wait to move out. Why are they smiling? Because they're riding. Uncertain as to what their mission and the resupply situation would be, U.S. troops in Grenada were overloaded, and many fell victim to heat exhaustion. Photo: AP/Wide World**



# KILLING EFFECT

## A Thinking Man's Guide to Wound Ballistics

by Peter G. Kokalis

WHEN anticipating a situation which would require the use of deadly force, one is obviously best equipped if he is carrying a weapon which is truly deadly and forceful, such as an assault rifle or a shotgun. However, social restraints, as well as situational and even operational considerations, often leave no alternative but to pack a pistol. A pistol you *do* have is far better than a shotgun you *don't* have, but the pistol is primarily a defensive tool, and any handgun has an inherently limited potential as a weapon. Having faced the fact that the weapon we carry has unavoidable limitations, how do we maximize its potential?

Having carefully attended to the mechanical well-being of your particular weapon (it obviously must function with absolute reliability and must shoot precisely where you aim it) and having become thoroughly trained in its use (no weapon of any configuration or caliber will help you if you can't put rounds on target), the single most important way to enhance the lethality of a handgun is by the careful selection of the ammunition you fire through it.

Much has been written on the subject of the lethality of various handgun calibers, loadings and bullets. Regrettably, very little of that published in the popular gun press has evidenced — or even acknowledged — the necessary frame of reference of physics, chemistry, mathematics, engineering, human physiology (likely human targets do not, after all, grow from Duxseal and pine boards) and trauma medicine. Indeed, much of that published appears to be merely “puff pieces” paraphrased from the promotional literature of manufacturers who would earnestly like you to buy their wonder bullets. For the most part, these manufacturers — both large and small — have been tailoring handgun ammunition so it will relate well to the ill-advised (and now discredited) Relative Incapacitation Index. We shall deal with the RII and some specific wonder bullets shortly, after we attempt to correct some of the unfortunate misconceptions which have been fed to a readership whose appetite for knowledge on a deadly serious subject has rarely if ever been adequately satisfied.

A favorite shibboleth of some gun writers is “kinetic energy,” along with such associated phrases as “muzzle energy” and “kinetic energy transfer” or “dump.” More than 50 years ago, Julian S. Hatcher in his classic work, *Textbook of Pistols and Revolvers*, stated “. . . if two bullets deliver

Clearing water out of the barrel of a M1911A1 Government Model .45 ACP pistol is not mentioned in FM 23-35, but this infantryman of the U.S. Army's 25th Division had just fallen into a waterhole during patrol in the Plain of Reeds, northwest of Saigon in March of 1967. As it has the potential for making the biggest hole, the .45 ACP round would still be our best choice, if a 230- to 260-grain mushrooming bullet were available. Photo: AP/Wide World

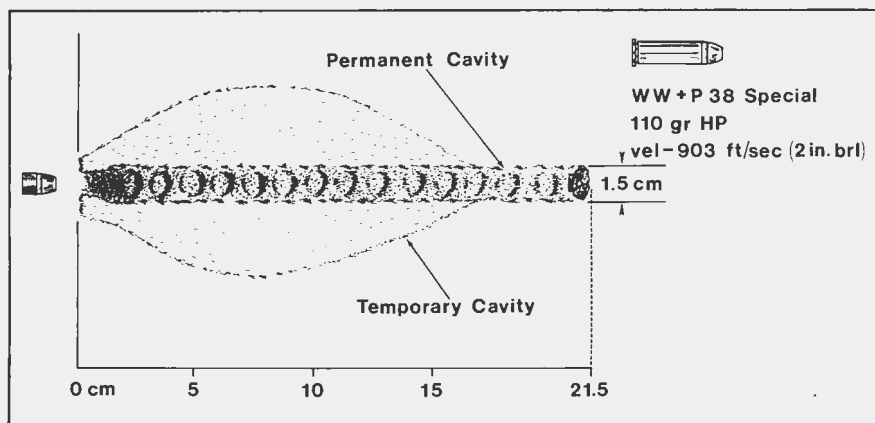
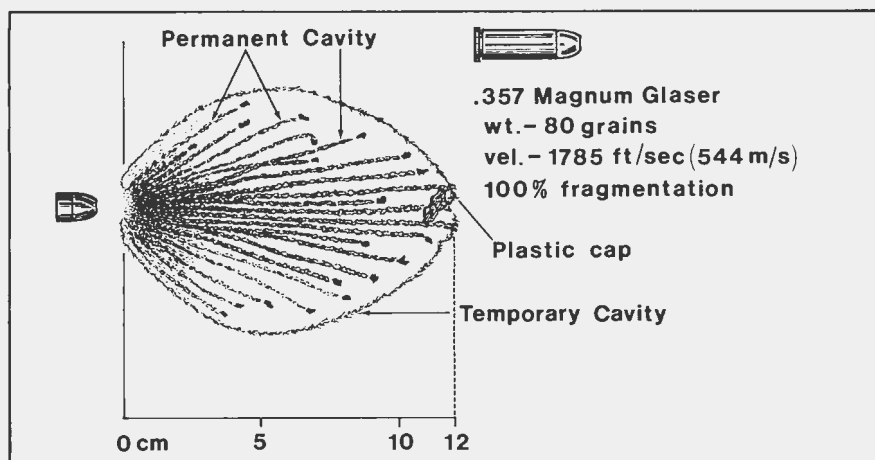


RIGHT: Filled with No. 12 birdshot, the much publicized Glaser Safety Slug is driven at extremely high velocity and literally explodes upon initial contact with human tissue. Producing a large, but shallow, temporary cavity, none of its pellets penetrate more than 4.7 inches. The Glaser is effective only against plastic water jugs and cantaloupes. Diagram courtesy Dr. Martin L. Fackler

equal amounts of energy to the body, the wound produced may be much more serious in one case than in another. Thus the amount of energy actually expended by the bullet in the body does not measure either the killing effect or the stopping power. A thrust with a dagger, which may kill in a few minutes, will deliver far less energy than a blow from the fist." In other words, kinetic energy is part of our consideration only because it is the kinetic energy, carried by the mass of the bullet to the target, which will ultimately make possible the destructive effect of the bullet, but there is not a direct or linear relationship between kinetic energy delivered to the target and the incapacitation of that target. In fact, as we shall see, with many projectiles more velocity (which with a constant mass translates to more kinetic energy delivered to the target) actually means less incapacitation of the target.

Furthermore, in any physical collision an appreciable amount of the kinetic energy is converted to heat energy. That amount of the bullet's energy which converts to heat will not be available to disrupt tissue. If kinetic energy is the pivotal consideration, it is incumbent upon those who insist on using kinetic energy as a magic power factor to demonstrate how much energy is lost to heat, and alter their calculations accordingly. To date, I am unaware that this has been done.

However, we don't need the first law of thermodynamics to illustrate how absurd it is to consider only muzzle energy when attempting to determine lethality. Common sense dictates, and the observations of anyone who ever witnessed a shooting will corroborate, that a handgun projectile carrying 450 foot-pounds of kinetic energy will not propel a 150-pound target three feet rearward, even if we disregard the coefficient of friction between the target and the ground. Let's be grateful for this; as Newton's third law of motion states that for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction, and the shooter would suffer the same consequences. If you don't believe me, strap on a Second Chance vest and see for yourself how far 450 foot-pounds (or even six times that amount, i.e. 7.62x51mm NATO ball) of blunt trauma will shove you rearward. However, common sense does not deter gun writers who plug this less than germane information into their every article. Perhaps because it sounds impressive, requires no laboratory equipment other than a chronograph, and its formula (kinetic energy equals the square of the velocity in feet per second multiplied by the weight of the bullet in grains and divided by 450,240) can be solved by those with no more than a grade-



ABOVE: A typical example of light-weight, high-velocity pistol ammunition fostered by the Relative Incapacitation Index. The Plus-P .38 Special bullet expands to .58 caliber but will penetrate not much more than 8 inches of soft tissue. Ammunition of this type should be avoided. Diagram courtesy Dr. Martin L. Fackler

school knowledge of arithmetic, they consider it to be good copy filler.

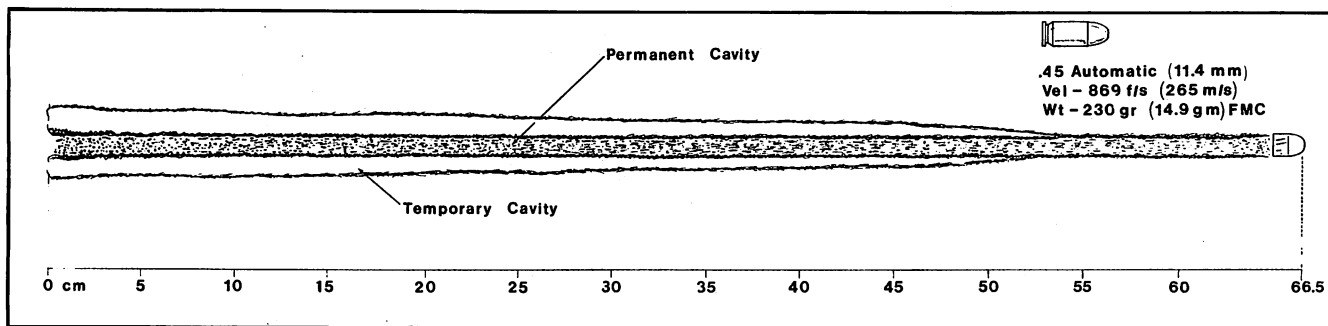
Other popular expressions are "instant incapacitation," "knockdown power" and "one-shot stops." It's true that some individuals drop dead from relatively superficial wounds, because they have apparently been programmed by television and the movies to believe that is the inevitable result of being shot. Don't count on your adversary responding in this manner, however, as others who have been severely wounded have reacted, at least initially, with even more aggression and violence. In his book, *Gunshot Wounds* (copyright 1985, Elsevier Science Publishing Co., Inc., New York, NY 10017), Dr. Vincent J. M. DiMaio reports an incident in which a man whose heart was literally shredded by No. 7½ pellets fired from a 12-gauge shotgun at a distance of only 3-4 feet was able to run 65 feet before collapsing. Consciousness depends, for our purposes here, upon the brain's continuing supply of oxygen. Medical research indicates that after complete occlusion of the brain's blood vessels, it may continue to function with its residual oxygen for seven to 15 seconds — permitting purposeful actions, such as pulling a trigger, to continue.

Drugs and alcohol can also numb the body's sensitivity to injury. Those seeking to deliver certain and instant incapacitation to their opponents had best position themselves behind an Hispano-Suiza 20mm automatic cannon firing High Explosive Incendiary ammunition, as no handgun can offer that guarantee.

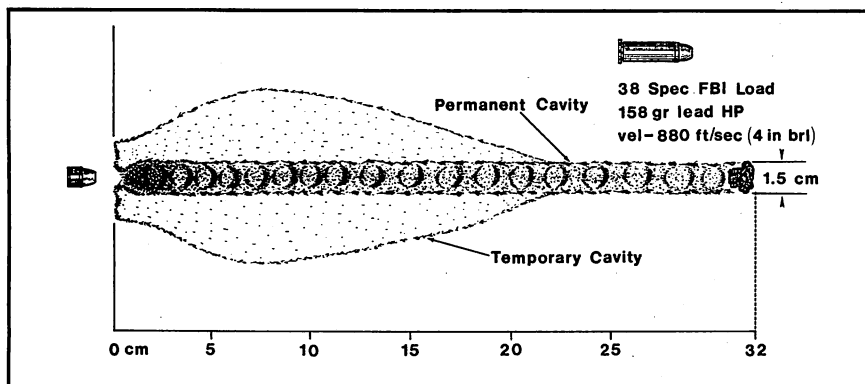
There are countless other misconceptions concerning the effects produced on the human body by the penetration of a projectile from a firearm. Almost all are a consequence of the failure to understand and adhere to the basic principles of the scientific method. An example of incorrect methodology would be to assume that specific pistol calibers and bullets would "stop fights" an exact percentage of times based solely upon the results of no more than a handful of homicide autopsies per caliber and bullet type. Such real-life statistical tabulations may be useful but can hardly be regarded as conclusive, given the narrowness of the data base; variables which are not included in the data are nearly infinite.

Valid tests of bullet performance are few and far between, but Dr. Martin L. Fackler, Director of the Wound Ballistics Laboratory at the Letterman Army Institute of Research in San Francisco, is among those whose scientific research has recently produced valuable data concerning gunshot wounds. As a medical doctor, Fackler is primarily concerned with wound ballistics insofar as they affect the surgeon's ability to treat gunshot wounds. Nevertheless, his findings have provided important corollary insights into combat bullet performance. Unfortu-





ABOVE: As this wound profile illustrates, the military's 230-grain FMJ .45 ACP bullet will penetrate almost 26 inches of soft tissue, but it neither expands nor yaws significantly in the target, and its wound track is not much greater than the bullet diameter. Diagram courtesy Dr. Martin L. Fackler



ABOVE: Wound profile of the famous .38 Special FBI load. Its 158-grain lead hollow-point bullet expands to .58 caliber and penetrates almost 12.5 inches of soft tissue. Although barely adequate, it's still far better than Winchester's Silvertip. Diagram courtesy Dr. Martin L. Fackler

nately, Fackler's results are usually presented in medical literature not readily available to the public.

Before we can discuss our options in the selection of effective handgun ammunition based upon such research, we must briefly survey the actual mechanisms of wounding.

The principal mechanism of wounding is the wound track itself. As the bullet travels through the body, it crushes and cuts through tissue and blood vessels and breaks bones, producing what is commonly called the "permanent cavity." The size of the permanent cavity can be increased by three factors. First, if the bullet yaws, and its long axis makes a greater angle with the path of travel, a wider area of tissue comes into contact with the bullet and is crushed. Second, expanding (or mushrooming) bullets increase their cross-sectional area and damage more tissue. Third, fragments from the bullet can detach and disrupt tissue outside the primary wound track. In terms of inflicting damage, the objective is to slice and dice as much as possible as deeply as possible.

In addition, a temporary cavity may be formed as tissue is stretched or accelerated away from the bullet's path. Relatively elastic tissue (such as muscle, intestines and lung) rebounds shortly after stretch by temporary cavitation with little damage. The temporary cavitation stretch produced by handgun bullets typically produces serious damage only in nonelastic organs, such as the liver. In general, the higher the bullet's impact velocity, the heavier the bullet and the less aerodynamic its shape, the greater will be the temporary cavity stretch. The Relative Incapacitation Index (RII), presented in 1983 and published in NIJ Report 101-83 for the U.S. Department of Justice, is based upon the unproven assumption that incapacitation of a human target is directly

proportional to temporary tissue stretch. This, in turn, resulted in the current fetish for light-weight, high-velocity bullets. Most of the elastic tissue subjected to stretch by temporary cavitation from handgun bullets survives, as this localized blunt trauma results in transient tissue displacement only. In essence, the RII study has produced a generation of handgun ammunition effective only if we aim at, and succeed in penetrating, the liver or heart. The Relative Incapacitation Index should be abandoned.

For a more graphic presentation of these important concepts, I can recommend without reservations the excellent video entitled, "Deadly Effects - What Bullets Do To Bodies," available from the Anite Company (Dept. SOF, P.O. Box 375, Pinole, CA 94564; telephone 415-724-1003. \$95 postpaid).

A fundamental principle of the scientific method is that experimental results must be reproducible by independent researchers. The human body is not homogeneous, however, and consequently building a meaningful data base on the relative effectiveness of ammunition would require an almost infinite number of tests with every caliber and bullet configuration at every location on the body. Even then, the results would not necessarily be reproducible, as every test specimen would be different in some physiological detail.

For similar reasons, the military tests the ability of projectiles to penetrate armor by shooting them at homogeneous plate of

known thickness and hardness. This yields data which can be directly compared with previous and future information. Shooting at automobile bodies, for instance, is an impressive gimmick, but offers little useful information, as the location of components such as the door and window mechanisms under the vehicles' skins remains unspecified and, in any event, varies from model and year.

To conduct valid tests of the effects of gunshot wounds on the human body, a simulant should be employed that approximates as closely as possible the penetration characteristics, deformation, fragmentation and yaw behavior of projectiles as seen in actual living tissue.

A variety of substances have been used to simulate human tissue, including Duxseal, modeling clay, soap, wood and wet phone books. All of these media will yield misleading information. Duxseal, clay and soap are nonelastic and remain near the position of maximum stretch produced by temporary cavitation. Bullets that exhibit no expansion whatsoever in living tissue will mushroom with regularity in Duxseal and clay. The results look awesome, and one might easily assume that the huge cavity produced demonstrates the potential for tissue destruction, when in reality it illustrates only the temporary stretch. Phone books and pine boards measure the penetration, expansion and permanent cavity through phone books and pine boards and little else.

Ordnance gelatin is the only tissue simulant in which both the temporary and permanent cavities can be examined. Penetration and both the deformation of the bullet and its fragmentation pattern can be readily determined, as can be the radial cracking that corresponds to the diameter of the temporary cavity. Fired projectiles and their fragments can be easily recovered from the gelatin block for more detailed examination. A useful overall approximation of the permanent cavity can be plotted by measuring the maximum diameter of the expanded bullet.

At the U.S. Army's Wound Ballistics Lab, Presidio of San Francisco, a 10 percent

solution of ordnance gelatin (Type 250 A) has been formulated that reproduces the penetration depth measured in living swine leg muscle when used at 39 degrees Fahrenheit (4 degrees Centigrade). As bullet deformation decreases, penetration increases, and preliminary research indicates that penetration in the abdomen will vary from identical to 1.6 times that produced in 10 percent gelatin. Shots into the chest tend to exhibit slightly less bullet deformation and deeper penetration than those into the abdomen. Correctly prepared, 20 percent gelatin yields a penetration depth only 77 percent that of muscle tissue. Preparation of the gelatin simulant is all-important, as excessive heating of the solution will destroy the very properties (strength and viscosity) that make it useful as a tissue simulant.

From measurements of the penetration depth, expanding bullet diameter and diameter of the temporary cavity in the gelatin blocks, together with X-rays of the projectile track, a drawing, called a wound profile, which permits an approximation of the wound characteristics in living tissue, is prepared at the Wound Ballistics Lab.

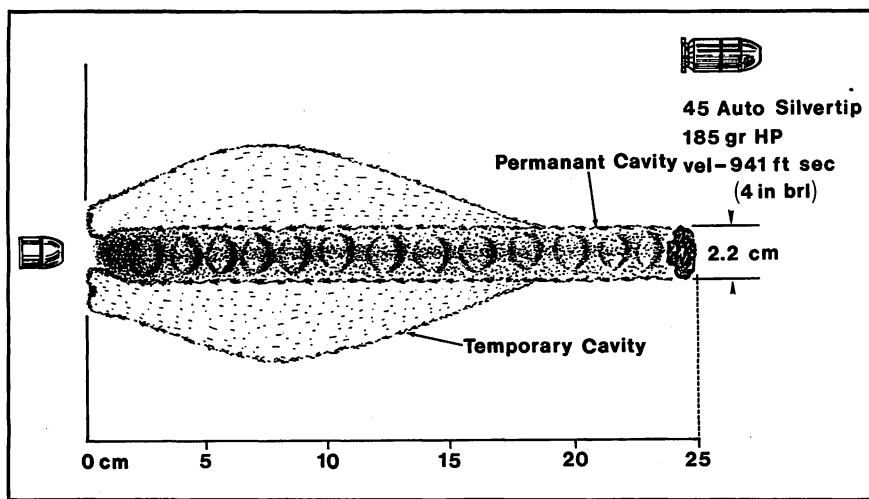
All very interesting, but what's the bottom line? What performance characteristics are we looking for in combat-effective handgun ammunition?

Penetration is, without doubt, the most important single parameter. The bullet must penetrate deeply enough to crush, cut and break through the human body's vital structures and organs. At a recent Wound Ballistic Workshop convened by the FBI, a panel of authorities concluded, with general consensus, that the capacity to penetrate up to 20 inches of soft tissue is desirable and that any bullet not capable of penetrating at least 12 inches is not acceptable for law enforcement use.

This may sound like over-penetration — every police chief's misguided nightmare. But remember, that's 20 inches through soft tissue, and we may have some bones to break, and varying amounts of fabric to penetrate. Furthermore, your opponent will probably be firing back at you. In which case, he will have his arms in front of his body holding a weapon, and your bullet may have to penetrate that part of his anatomy before it drives into his torso.

Once the required penetration is obtained, the bullet that makes the biggest hole will do the most damage. That means we want a bullet in the largest caliber that can be controlled by the shooter. We can further enhance this characteristic if we employ a soft-point or hollow-point bullet that will reliably expand to no more than twice the original diameter. *It's important to remember that if we drive a hollow-point at too high a velocity, it will inevitably over-expand and reduce the penetration to an unacceptable depth.* It may also fragment to an undesirable extent. There's a correct velocity for every handgun bullet, and it is not the highest velocity possible.

Tragically, handgun ammunition manufacturers, with few exceptions, have failed



Winchester's "Silvertip" ammunition suffers from the same deficiencies as almost all the other handgun loadings featuring light-weight, high-velocity bullets — over-expansion and under-penetration. In its current version the .45 ACP Silvertip expands to a diameter of .85 caliber but only penetrates 10.4 inches of soft tissue. Diagram courtesy Dr. Martin L. Fackler

to deliver the right goods to do the job. Worst of all have been the exotic specialty loads, shrouded in a glib mystique that only serves to mask their woeful performance. There seems to be an inverse correlation between their price and performance — the higher the price, the poorer the results. In general, they all feature light bullets moving at high velocities that magnify temporary cavitation, result in over-expansion, insufficient penetration, and quite often excessive fragmentation. Examples of this type of ammunition include the Glaser safety slug, aluminum Equaloy, Omnislock, MagSafe and MAP. In my opinion, you should avoid them all.

The much-publicized Glaser safety slug is essentially a copper jacket, filled with No. 12 birdshot and sealed with a plastic cap. Moving at an impressive sounding muzzle velocity of 1,785 fps in .357 Magnum, it literally explodes on initial contact with human tissue and produces a large, but shallow, temporary cavity. The multiple wound tracks are no larger in diameter than the .05-inch pellets. None of these pellets penetrate more than 4.7 inches. This just isn't acceptable. Of course, if this blast of rat shot strikes the heart, it will most likely prove fatal (as would most any other bullet). But that's not a likely scenario, especially if your opponent is bobbing and weaving about and throwing lead in your direction.

SOF tested another example of ultra-high-velocity ammunition, the 9mm Parabellum MAP ("Maximum Auto Pistol") round distributed by Personal Protection Systems, Ltd. (PPS). Its 67-grain projectile is entirely too complex and consists of a hollow-point copper bullet with a Nylon cap. In back of the cap is a lead cup (nothing more than a skirted airgun pellet), behind which is a steel ball. From all this we obtain

up to 1,700 fps in muzzle velocity and inconsistent penetration (only 9.5 to 12.5 inches). The copper bullet itself is quite brittle and breaks into numerous small fragments that remain close to the wound track's centerline and do little additional damage. The permanent cavity is not much larger than the original bullet diameter, because the expanding fragments break away and don't stay attached to the bullet. The temporary cavity varies from 3.3-4.3 inches in diameter, but again, it's very close to the surface — just where it's the least effective.

The large ammunition manufacturers have a track record almost as dismal. Federal distributes a 110-grain hollow-point .38 Special load that it prominently labels "For Law Enforcement Use Only" and "Controlled Expansion." Driving out of the muzzle at approximately 1,150 fps, it penetrates only 9 inches of soft tissue. Its "Controlled Expansion" consists of a mushrooming projectile that sheds numerous small fragments.

Recently Federal obtained the rights to manufacture and market the Hydra-Shok bullet. These bullets contain a large hollow-point cavity with a strange post in the center that is supposed to direct mysterious "hydraulic forces" against the cavity wall to ensure expansion. Tests have demonstrated that expansion is identical when the post is removed entirely. Charades like this might be humorous were it not for the fact that the joke is on you when you pay extra for this useless stratagem.

No pistol ammunition has received more marketing hype in recent years than the Winchester Silvertip. In caliber 9mm Parabellum it has been adopted by countless law enforcement agencies. It's also undergone at least three generations of evolution and that should tell you something. In fact, this famous cartridge has always suffered the same malaise as all the other high velocity, light-weight handgun bullets: over-expansion and not enough penetration. Olin recently degraded this cartridge even further. Dissatisfied with the standard Silvertip's performance, the Illinois State Police requested an improved loading. Olin re-

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# CENTER FOR DEFENSE DISINFOR- MATION

## Leftist Lobby Weakens America the Old Fashioned Way — They Subvert It

by Mike Fumento  
Illustrations by David Suter

WASHINGTON, D.C. crawls with so-called "public interest groups," those intrepid organizations that in the name of the American people lobby for or provide educational material in support of a cause which usually boils down to saving the Republic. Some, such as the National Gay Rights Task Force, make their viewpoints clear in their very name. Others with more ambiguous names — the Eagle Forum, Common Cause — will nevertheless tell you directly where they stand and what they support. But perhaps the most effective organizations are those which confuse both issues and would-be opponents by adapting the type of name and the vernacular of those very groups which they fight and despise. Enter the organization with the very hawkish-sounding name of Center for Defense Information (CDI).

CDI consists of 25 staffers, and is directed by retired Rear Admiral Gene R. La Rocque, who has been the organization's director since its founding in 1972. La Rocque, who has been called the "Ralph Nader of the military," overtly belies the

### ON THE WASHINGTON BEAT

Michael Fumento is a frequent contributor to *The American Spectator* and other journals of opinion. The current article is a revised and updated version of an earlier article, "The Center for Defense Information," which appeared in the April 1988 issue of the *Spectator*. His forthcoming book, *The Myth of Heterosexual AIDS*, will be published by New Republic Books.

image, with sad, puppy-dog eyes and a friendly, down-home manner. Yet he runs a tight ship, and critics who speculate that he is more of a figurehead than a leader should watch as his crew snaps to attention when he calls from his office.

For nearly a year, beginning in 1984, La Rocque and CDI worked to get the Soviets and the United States and its allies to ban

nuclear testing beginning on the 40th anniversary of Hiroshima, 6 August 1985. The State Department replied that such a moratorium could not be adequately verified and that "nuclear testing plays an important role in ensuring a credible U.S. deterrent, particularly in view of the massive Soviet buildup of nuclear forces." But CDI persisted, and on 29 July, following a crash program of nuclear testing, the Soviet Union announced a half-year suspension. Thus the Soviets scored a major propaganda coup, CDI was able to claim itself as the originator of "the most important arms control development of the decade," and Uncle Sam was left with a dove egg on his face.

CDI made the news more recently by hosting a conference of American and Soviet generals last April. The FBI noted the conference in its 1986-1987 report on Soviet active measures. The report noted that a group of former NATO officers called Generals for Peace and Disarmament (GPD) "has been targeted by Soviet intelligence services [and] has echoed views consistent with Soviet arms control objectives and against NATO." The report goes on to say that, "although the CDI is not officially affiliated with the GPD, it engages in similar activities and supports the activities and statements of the GPD and former Soviet military officers. The Soviets have effectively utilized statements made by GPD and CDI officials in their active measures campaigns."

CDI also deserves part of the credit for the signing of the INF theater-range missile reduction treaty, insofar as it has steadfastly maintained resistance against the deployment of Pershing II and ground-launched cruise missiles in Europe.

The Center's program includes a library which is open to area researchers; a series of books, one of which at least, *Current Issues in U.S. Defense Policy*, has been used as a standard text in college courses; the Center's reference service, providing quick information upon request; and radio programs, films, and a new weekly TV series called *America's Defense Monitor*, which is shown on independent cable stations because, as CDI's director of research puts it, "since it's our point of view, even PBS might not consider it as balanced as they would like." About 300 stations around the country carry the show, with a potential viewing audience numbering approximately four million. CDI's most important publication is *The Defense Monitor*, a newsletter published 10 times a year with each issue devoted to a specific defense issue. Originally, issues of *Defense Monitor* carried a blurb at the top stating that CDI advocates a "strong defense." But in 1986, in a move that went beyond semantics, the Center changed this to an "effective defense." Almost 100,000 copies of this publication are sent out each month, most of which, according to the Center, are paid subscriptions.

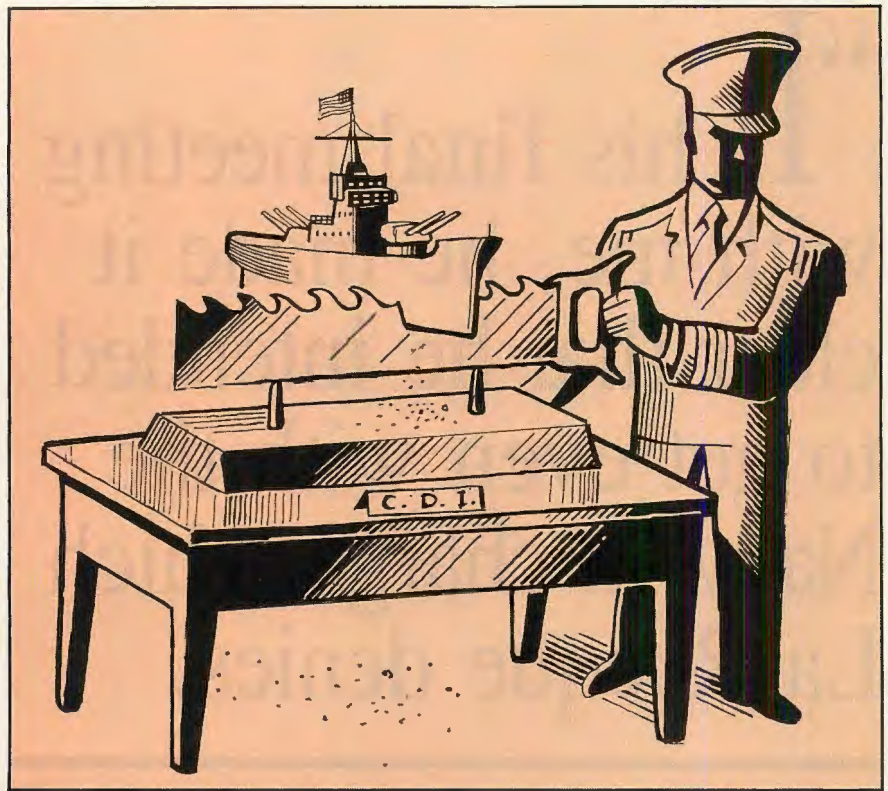
CDI was started as a project of the Fund for Peace, a leftist tax-exempt organization headquartered in Washington, D.C., and financed initially with funds from General

Motors heir Stewart R. Mott. Like Joan Kroc, Mott is representative of that oh-too-prevalent brand of left-wing philanthropist who made their millions "the old-fashioned way" (by inheritance) and feel they can spend it with a clean conscience only if they give large parts of it away to those who seek to destroy the system that allowed the creation and transfer of the wealth in the first place. In addition to CDI, the Fund for Peace has been the parent organization of several groups which have had interlocking relationships with CDI. These include the Center for National Security Studies, whose personnel have shown a pattern of interrelationship with the far-left Institute for Policy Studies (IPS), the Center for International Policy, some of whose principal activists have also had close ties to IPS, and In the Public Interest, a project designed to "counteract the onslaught of right-wing broadcasting." Nicholas Nyary, listed as president of the Fund for Peace in a list of officers and board members of the fund circulated in 1975, served as secretary-general of the World Peace Council (WPC) in 1976. The WPC was cited in a July 1978 CIA report as "the most important Soviet front organization" which "supports disarmament on Soviet terms (without international inspection) along with various subsidiary campaigns backing Soviet policy on the Middle East, Cyprus, Chile, South Africa and other regional problems."

While Research Director David Johnson plays down the CDI/Fund for Peace connection ("They always had a minimum of input into CDI"), some of the members of CDI's own advisory board have had controversial doings. Harold Willens was a member of the Board of Trustees of the Fund for Peace and was a principal leader in the anti-Vietnam War organization Business Executives Move for Vietnam Peace. This group was responsible for a broadcast, later played over Radio Hanoi, of a man claiming to be an ex-Marine pilot who denounced U.S. bombing and accused U.S. military forces of war crimes against the Vietnamese people.

Another CDI board member, Dr. Earl C. Ravenal, has served as a "fellow" at IPS and participated in a project co-sponsored by IPS and the Transnational Institute, which has connections to Fourth International, a world-wide Trotskyite apparatus with a documented record of support for terrorist violence. Other notable advisers include Paul Newman, active in the nuclear freeze, who narrated a film for CDI, and his wife Joanne Woodward. Norman Cousins, former publisher of *Saturday Review* and commonly identified as a "one-world liberal," is also an adviser. Other than his magazine connection, Cousins is best known for advocating laughter as a cure for cancer. The director of CDI's "Women's Agenda" is Barbara Levin, wife of Senator Carl Levin, D-Mich., a member of the Armed Services Committee and a key critic of U.S. nuclear weapons policy.

Since its separation from the Fund for Peace in 1983, CDI has continued to draw



**Washington, D.C.-based Center for Defense Information, headed by retired Rear Admiral Gene R. La Rocque, gives new meaning to the undercutting of U.S. national security policy.**

its funds from the left. (The Center boasts that its books of individual contributors are open to all, but this is not true. After being shown a list of contributors without dollar amounts, I was promised a printout with figures included that "will probably be available overnight." After a week and a half of waiting and pestering I was told that such a printout, in fact, could only be ready in three months. When I then requested a copy of the original list that I had been shown, that, too, was denied. Other reporters have encountered similar opposition.) Consulting the *Foundation Grants Index*, 16th Edition, one finds that CDI received a \$500,000 grant in 1985 from the (Joan B.) Kroc Foundation, which in that same year contributed \$100,000 to the left-wing Beyond War Foundation and the Union of Concerned Scientists, a pro-nuclear-freeze group. Joan Kroc is also notable for having recently having distributed \$1 million to the Democratic party. The Town Creek Foundation, Inc., gave \$10,000 to CDI in 1985, at the same time giving from \$5,000-\$10,000 to such left-wing groups as Educators for Social Responsibility, Physicians for Social Responsibility, the SANE (no-nuke) Educational Fund, and the Union of Concerned Scientists. The Mertz-Gilmore Foundation gave CDI \$10,000 in 1985 "for programs focused on how to stop the nuclear arms race." That same year it gave \$5,000-\$10,000 to such left-wing groups as the Center for War/Peace Studies, the

Downstate New York Nuclear Weapons Freeze Campaign, Educators for Social Responsibility, the LAMBDA Legislative Defense and Education Fund (for homosexual rights), the Lawyer's Alliance for Nuclear Arms Control, the Lawyer's Committee for International Human Rights, the Nuclear Weapons Education Fund (to work for a nuclear freeze), Physicians for Social Responsibility, and the SANE Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy.

CDI also would not inform me of its budget, other than to say "between one and two million dollars a year." As of 1985, however, it had a budget of approximately \$1.5 million.

Gene Robert La Rocque's military career began in the University of Illinois Army ROTC program, where he was in both the infantry and cavalry. He didn't take much to horses — his right arm causes him trouble to this day as a result of a horse stomping his hand — and with a half-year to go before graduating, joined the Navy. He was an ensign aboard the USS *MacDonough* when the Japanese attacked it and the bulk of the 7th Fleet at Pearl Harbor on a sunny Sunday morning in December 1941. La Rocque participated in 13 major naval battles during the war, serving aboard several warships. During an assault in the Marshall Islands, La Rocque claims to have led the Marines in storming the beach, the experience of which he said later made him hate guns, and hand-guns in particular. Nevertheless, he went on to spend 31 years in the military, retiring in 1972 only after he was passed over for a fleet command. According to Admiral Elmo Zumwalt, who was chief of naval operations at the time, La Rocque was asked to retire: "In his final meeting with me, he made it

# “I In his final meeting with me, he made it clear that he intended to get even with the Navy,” a charge which La Rocque denies.

clear that he intended to get even with the Navy,” a charge which La Rocque denies.

Whatever the motivation, shortly after retiring he helped form CDI, which boasts among its staff seven high-ranking retired military officers, in addition to which La Rocque claims to have about 500 military supporters. All of the military officers on the staff and on the board of advisers are from the ocean-going services (Navy and Marines), a fact which La Rocque attributes to the Navy “drawing our officers from basically the eastern establishment schools” [while the Army] takes officers from enlisted ranks, something we don’t do.” He also believes that Navy officers have an expanded outlook as a result of their world travels on ship. Other former naval officers with whom I spoke, however, thought the greater preponderance was mostly attributable to La Rocque’s personal connections built while he was in the service.

Members of the media often call upon CDI to supply the latest information on the Persian Gulf situation, U.S. naval build-up, U.S.-Soviet arms reduction negotiations, and in other areas. A survey of three months of clippings from last year shows 40 newspaper and magazine articles in that period either by CDI staffers or using CDI-supplied information. In this survey, CDI was virtually never referred to with an ideological adjective. Instead, the center is referred to as “Washington-based” or “military research group” or “a private, non-profit group that analyzes this country’s military spending, policies and weapons systems,” or “private military research organization,” “watchdog group,” “private watchdog group based on Washington,” and “Washington group that compiles military data” (*The New York Times* boilerplate). Only the *Chicago Sun-*

*Times* used an ideological label, in one of two articles, calling CDI “liberally oriented.” In contrast, a similar survey of articles which used material supplied by the Heritage Foundation revealed that that Heritage was referred to as either “conservative” or “right-wing” more than half the time.

Despite the failure to identify in print the orientation of CDI, reporters I talked to seemed to be guarded in their attitude toward the Center. *The New York Times* reporter John Cushman Jr. says he uses CDI information, “primarily for factual information on [Persian] Gulf operations — numbers of ships, flow of oil, attacks, and so on. When you use them for that, I’ve found you don’t have to worry about politics. I make less use of their long reports,” he says, in reference to the *Defense Monitor*. Tara Sonenshine, a producer and off-air reporter for *ABC News* who covers the Pentagon says, “[CDI] can be a wonderful source for detailed things, minutiae such as ship counts and what-not.” Other material, however, she says she uses, “not as gospel but as a base guide.” Says Sonenshine, “Do they have an agenda? I think so. They have a point of view and they express it [but] as with anybody’s material, it’s the onus of the reporter to check it out.”

Bill Gertz, who covers the Pentagon for the *Washington Times*, is less complimentary. “I don’t think I’ve ever found them helpful. When I need statistics I go to the Pentagon or the Library of Congress or some established source, but not CDI. They often reflect the Soviet position on so many things.”

As to why an ideological label was applied so infrequently to CDI, the reporters queried seemed somewhat surprised. “I never would have guessed that,” says James Coates, former Pentagon reporter for

the *Chicago Tribune*. “It’s pretty important [but it could be because] CDI has been around comparatively forever, while the Heritage Foundation didn’t amount to a hill of beans until Reagan came aboard,” hence the two are commonly identified together.

As to the effect CDI has had on the media, Coates says, “They’ve had a definite effect on me” and that “the merits of their material gets them over the taint of Stewart Mott, who’s considered an eccentric bleeding heart liberal.” He adds, “They have a tremendous effect on the media in general, the same as they’ve had on me.”

CDI also makes its influence felt in Congress. Although Hill staffers tend to rely on their own research services rather than consulting CDI as reporters do, CDI’s ideas get exposure through the *Defense Monitor*, which is provided regularly free of charge to congressional offices. Bruce MacDonald, a legislative assistant to Sen. Barbara Mikulski, (D-Md.) on the Armed Services Committee, says he finds *Defense Monitor* “helpful,” that CDI information is “pretty accurate,” and that CDI’s political angle is minimally worrisome. “They try to remain objective, but most people realize they’re of somewhat liberal origin,” he says.

Another legislative assistant to a liberal-Democratic senator, one who serves on the Armed Services Subcommittee of the Appropriations Committee, believes CDI has been tremendously effective on the hill, but that it is effectiveness he does not welcome. “In my view,” says the assistant, who wishes to remain unidentified, “they were one of the more outspoken groups that started our country on the road to anti-military mentality.”

It’s probably not surprising that conservative members of the military establishment oppose CDI’s initiatives, though perhaps their tone is surprisingly harsh. Some have stopped just short of accusing the Center of treason. In 1983, 424 retired admirals bought a full-page advertisement in the *Washington Times*, the headline of which read, “We Think That It Is Time to Let the American People Know Where the Vast Majority of Their Retired U.S. Navy Admirals Stand.” A sub-head said, “Retired Rear Admiral Larocque’s [sic] Appearance on Soviet Television to Condemn the Policies of the United States Is Contrary to Our Precepts and, We Think, Injurious to the Best Interests of Our Country.” The following month, a similar advertisement signed by 586 retired admirals was placed in the same paper. The signatures in both advertisements had been solicited by retired Admiral Thomas H. Moorer, who had served as chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff under President Nixon. The advertisements followed La Rocque’s appearance on a Soviet evening program in which La Rocque was placed opposite Deputy Secretary of State Kenneth W. Dam and in which he charged that President Reagan, “is not serious about arms control.” The only one of eight former Chiefs of Naval Operations

who did not sign the advertisement was Admiral Zumwalt, who said he would have signed save that he had been traveling and had not had a chance to see the text beforehand. Undersecretary of the Navy Seth Cropsy, on the other hand, refuses to impugn the admiral's patriotism. "Traitor is a bit strong," says Cropsy. "I think he's just a jerk." Yet a third retired military officer, who wishes anonymity, simply expresses bewilderment. "[La Rocque] is really a far-out guy. I don't understand how he can come through a [military] system like this and end up like he has."

But while conservative military men take a dim view of CDI, the Center finds itself criticized even among Pentagon watchdogs. William Lind is the co-author of *America Can Reform* with Sen. Gary Hart, which details what the authors consider a dangerous misallocation of defense funds. "I don't think very highly of CDI," says Lind. "Generally speaking, they're against everything. I don't attach much credentials to those who favor either everything the Pentagon does or to those who criticize everything without offering alternatives." Lind distinguishes the goal in *America Can Reform* from the efforts of CDI. "Our motivation was combat effectiveness in Armed Forces — a military that can win when called upon," he says. "The [military reform] group that I'm a part of is always careful to form alternatives, but La Rocque's group doesn't. From their [CDI's] literature, I cannot recollect any major defense project they support."

Indeed, a listing of major defense projects and CDI's assessment of them bears out Lind's suspicions. The following evaluations are from a 1987 *Defense Monitor*:

- *No more MX missiles [than the current 50 ordered]. The existing 1,000 U.S. land-based missiles, with 2,177 nuclear warheads, are more than sufficient for effective retaliation.*
- *Cancel Trident II missile . . . Such weapon systems support a dangerous U.S. nuclear war-fighting strategy and would increase the probability of a first strike by one side or the other in a period of military tension.*
- *Cancel Midgetman Mobile Missile . . . The U.S. does not need another 500 nuclear missiles, especially at a total program cost of \$45 billion.*
- *Abolish SDI [the Strategic Defense Initiative or 'Star Wars' system] . . . at its very best [SDI] would provide no more than an imperfect defense against only one form of nuclear attack. To develop this partial, leaky shield will ultimately cost hundreds of billions of dollars which will consume funds needed for legitimate defense programs . . . SDI will stimulate an accelerated offensive arms buildup and wreck strategic arms control efforts.*
- *Cancel the Stealth Bomber . . . The Pentagon has not provided sufficient justification for 132 new penetrating bombers.*
- *Cancel deployment of the advanced Cruise Missile . . . The Air Force already*

# He also says that they criticize the United States more because "we're an American organization."

*has planned deployment of 2,179 ground-launched and air-launched cruise missiles, which is more than adequate for nuclear retaliation.*

Research Director David Johnson, who has been with CDI since the beginning, basically concedes Lind's point. He does note that, "We have supported improvement programs for the B-52 and the like, and never criticized the MIRV [multiple war-head missile] [but] we do, as most liberals shall we say, have a fondness for submarine-based missiles." Yet he admits that just as CDI opposes Trident II now, it also opposed the Trident I system. "It seemed wasteful and premature," he says.

Besides Lind, another of the more important Pentagon watchdogs is Edward Luttwak, author of the critical book *The Pentagon and the Art of War* and a strategy analyst at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, is decidedly not a member of the Lind-Hart group. "He's on the peripheries," says Lind. "Some of his ideas I like; some I don't." But one thing they seem to agree on is CDI. Says Luttwak, "The people involved [with CDI] are respectable and their data sheets are usually accurate, but in no sense should they describe themselves as a center for defense information or [present themselves as being] in any sense balanced. They only show opposition to different plans; they provide only reasons not to do something. They only provide half the truth."

Johnson is clearly concerned with CDI's image of one-sidedness, and somewhat apologetic. "We know that many perceive us as one-sided, always grinding out the same message. We just don't have the resources to lay out alternatives," he says. The fact that we may appear unbalanced reflects in part how a small organization has

to operate. One is a critic; one is a gadfly." He also says that they criticize the United States more because "we're an American organization." Such rationalization is admittedly convenient to the Soviets since they don't allow such organizations. He adds somewhat apologetically, "Perhaps it would help us if we did things perceived as less critical of the U.S." On a later occasion, Johnson proudly showed me a copy of a *Defense Monitor* dating back to 1979 which took the Soviets to task for greatly increasing their weapons exports. But even this report took every advantage to take backhanded swipes at U.S. policy. Stated the *Monitor*:

*In an attempt to take the United States off the hook for its role as an arms merchant and to undermine the assumptions behind President Carter's policy of arms sales restraint, several recent reports have purported to show that the Soviet Union is the driving force behind the arms race in the Third World. Reality, as always, is far more complex . . . According to figures released by the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency . . . the Soviets have delivered more than the United States worldwide in only five of 14 categories.*

The emphasis was added, and in fact this was the only emphasized sentence on the page. Here's how the report concluded:

*The lesson for President Carter and his advisers, however, is that American arms sales policy should not rest on Soviet behavior . . . After more than 20 years, Soviet military sales and aid have not, on balance, substantially extended Soviet influence or power . . . The current growth of their exports and yet the acquisition of new friends in Africa is no justification for American expansion of*

# Poland: Says La Rocque, "Poles are the most reluctant to have the Soviets pull out because they're more afraid of the Germans than of the Russians."

its own exports to counter supposed Soviet influence. Visions of global confrontations simply do not square with the realities of frustration and failure which have dogged the Soviet program.

So much for criticizing the Soviets.

The image of "those poor, dumb bumbling Soviets" and "dogged" Soviet efforts is one that CDI enjoys painting. Time and again, we are told how every time the Soviets attempt to do something bad to someone it flies right back in their face. CDI evaluations of the Soviets always seem to read like parables, such as the one about the bone-carrying dog who upon seeing his reflection in a stream, grabs for the bone reflected in the water and drops the one he has. "I think history has taught the Soviets a sense of humility," says Johnson. "The many failures they have had with the international communist movement, China for example . . . They can't even subdue one little country outside their border," says La Rocque in reference to Afghanistan, not pointing out that CDI opposes U.S. aid to Afghanistan and all anti-communist guerrilla movements and that without such aid the Soviets would almost surely have succeeded in their conquest. In fact, right before the Soviet pullout was announced, La Rocque even denied the possibility of a mujahideen victory, telling Johns that American support for the resistance would "simply prolong the fighting."

The image of the bumbling Soviets makes a wonderful comeback to those who

insist that the Soviets are a truly malevolent force seeking every opportunity to expand their empire. Key to the principle that the Soviets are not seeking to expand their influence is CDI's belief that these bumbling have had little success in doing so in recent years. This includes not only acquired territories, but the Soviet Union itself. "What have they got for the effort [of expanding beyond Russia]?" says La Rocque. "A myriad of mismatched ethnic groups . . . almost an unmanageable system." One *Defense Monitor*, "Soviet Geopolitical Momentum: Myth or Menace?" put out in 1986, supports the assumption that the Soviets can no longer expand their influence. The report spells out in unequivocal exact percentages what part of the world was once "Soviet-influenced" and what is today. That percentage:

*. . . rose to nearly 15 percent in the late 1950s, declined to nine percent in the mid-1960s, and finally rose back to over 12 percent in the mid-1970s. It has remained at 11 percent for the past seven years. According to this indicator, Soviet world influence was at its height in the 1950s and there has been no significant positive Soviet geopolitical momentum for many years. [Emphasis in original.]*

In considering countries that are supposedly not under Soviet influence, one immediately notices the absence of such countries as North Korea. Kim Il Sung's government in just the last few years has strength-

ened diplomatic ties with the Soviets, allowed Soviet planes fly-over rights enroute to Vietnam, accepted dozens of Soviet MiG fighters and Hind helicopters, and sent combat troops and advisers to countries in Africa and Asia where resistance forces are battling Soviet proxies. Other countries conspicuously absent from the listing of Soviet-influenced nations include Zimbabwe and Finland, notwithstanding that "Finlandization" has come to mean, as defined by the *Dictionary of Political Thought*, "the process of becoming covertly dependent upon, and responsive to, the demands of a powerful neighbor, for fear of being forced to concede much more." Nicaragua, too, is omitted from the *Defense Monitor*, but if, as one CDI critic put it, Nicaragua is just "a prelude to a Soviet effort to take Mexico," the Soviets are hardly the bumbling we would like to think they are.

CDI cannot even concede that the Soviets are malicious. "We don't assume this is the operating motive of the Soviets," says Johnson. "I'm not going to disagree that there are certain elements [in the Soviet Union] that pursue a Marxist-Leninist world view, but they [the Soviets] in general are principally oriented towards dealing with domestic issues. They are trying to stabilize their internal position, to prolong the period of economic development and improve the quality of life at home." Why leaders with such motives would hamstring their economy by spending over 15 percent of their GNP on military expenditures to maintain the largest armed forces in the world and maintain occupation forces or military advisers on all continents save North America must be puzzling indeed. These "anomalies" are explained away on a point by point basis.

- Most of Eastern Europe: Says Johnson, "[This resulted from] the aftermath of the war. The USSR hung on and is still working itself out." He also admitted it might be in part due to the Marxist-Leninist world view element in the Soviet government. La Rocque says that the occupation results from the Soviet desire for a buffer zone, but lest we believe he approves, adds: "I can understand the desire for a [defense] corridor, but it's time for them to get out."
- Afghanistan: Says Johnson, "Again, it's probably a significant reflection of Marxist-Leninist residuals. They probably thought of it as coming to the aid of a Marxist government."
- Poland: Says La Rocque, "Poles are the most reluctant to have the Soviets pull out because they're more afraid of the Germans than of the Russians." He then recounted the story of the time he declared, "When are the Soviets going to pull that damned [Berlin] wall down!" to which an eavesdropping Polish ambassador told him that his people wanted the wall to remain up.

While La Rocque chooses as his source a high official of the communist Polish govern-

ernment, lower non-officials seem to have a different story. Jan Karski, who ran messages out of German-occupied Poland during the war and was captured by the Germans and held until being rescued by the Polish underground, has a different view. "It's true that [Poles] are traditionally afraid of Germans, but this doesn't mean that they want the Soviets. They just want to be left alone," he says. Karski, whose book on his exploits was published in the United States in 1944, says, "There is no danger from the Germans, while the Soviets are in Poland right now."

Certainly, were one to poll more Poles, one could find other points of view, but Karski's assessment seems logical enough. Why, one is left to ask, would any people favor a present actual occupation force over a future potential one?

This benevolent (or as some critics assert, "apologetic") attitude toward the Soviets and their aims, is far more important in understanding CDI's motivations than simply excusing Soviet expansionism. It also carries over into the area of strategic nuclear weapons, both in excusing Soviet treaty violations and in asserting that the United States does not need the weapons or the number of weapons that many of us think it does. For example, it allows CDI to fully support the SALT treaty because, in CDI's view in a 1987 *Defense Monitor*, "The Soviet Union has complied with all of the principal requirements of the SALT I and II agreements." In a 1987 *Defense Monitor*, CDI admitted that the radar under construction near Krasnoyarsk, the new SS-25 ICBM, and the Soviet use of encryption to conceal missile test telemetry "are among the issues that warrant serious investigation and discussion with the Soviets." Here's how it deals with the alleged Krasnoyarsk violation:

*The Administration believes that it is an early warning radar because it closely resembles other Soviet radars of this type. If so, it would be in violation of the ABM treaty . . . The signals emitted by the radar when it is turned on will help to resolve the issue . . . In the meantime, the Soviets reportedly offered to halt construction on the radar if the U.S. would do the same on two early warning phased-array radars that it is installing in Greenland and the UK. Whether the U.S. explored the offer is not known, but it seems clear that the Administration's high voltage publicity . . . is not calculated to encourage the Soviets to push their offer further.*

Incidentally, there has been no charge that the American radars violate any treaty. Thus, the Soviet "offer" is an attempt to get something for nothing. More importantly, note how CDI turns the issue around so that it looks as if the United States is at fault! CDI does it again with the SS-25 alleged violation:

*• The Soviets fought hard in the SALT negotiations to avoid restrictions that would have prevented them from de-*



**Admiral Zumwalt told the *Navy Times*, "if La Rocque's ideas prevail, my children will not live out their lives in freedom."**

*ploying the SS-25. [Former] Assistant Secretary of Defense Richard Perle has deplored this type of negotiating practice, saying that it amounts to designing loopholes in the treaty. It could be argued with equal merit that the Soviets' refusal to accept language that they knew they could not honor demonstrates their respect for the treaty.*

To which the person of average intelligence would reply: "Huh?" Yes, in CDI-speak, the Soviets demonstrate their respect for a treaty by violating it. And if that's not enough, the *Monitor* section on the SS-25 concludes, "It's difficult to see how the modest increase in military capability they stand to gain [from replacing SS-11s with SS-25s] would justify jeopardizing SALT." In other words, call it a violation if you want, it's just not that big a deal. Except, of course, to the foolish layman who might conclude that Soviet willingness to violate one section of such an important treaty shows Soviet willingness to violate treaties in general.

Finally, on the telemetry encryption (the practice of denying electronic information transmitted by missiles in test flight to monitoring stations of the other side), the *Monitor* states, "The issue is whether this practice is a blatant violation of the treaty or simply a case of the Soviets making use of ambiguous language." Somehow, we know which side CDI is going to come down on.

CDI's mindset is again apparent in its *Defense Monitor* of 1987, "U.S. Invasion of Nicaragua: Appraising the Option." The report gives a day-by-day projection of how such an invasion would progress, drawing up a scenario that sounds like a jingoist's or anti-communist's wet dream. By the end of the first month, after suffering only 200 killed in action, U.S. forces would completely dominate the country and the first withdrawals would have begun. Yet, the report comes to the conclusion that such an invasion would be ill-considered.

*An invasion by the U.S. could make more communists than it kills as the Sandinistas who escape Nicaragua will surely spread their fear, suspicion and hatred of the U.S. throughout all of Latin America. [It would] alarm even our closest friends in the region [and] make a mockery of America's commitment to the principle of self-determination and bring discredit on our government among millions of our own citizens and more millions of our friends abroad.*

On the positive side, the report does ask: "What will supporting the contras and then invading Nicaragua achieve?" But the only reply it gives is: "The contras are now spreading death and destruction which intensifies the existing polarization among Nicaraguans; they are making constructive change in Nicaragua less likely."

That's it. There's no talk of the Sandinista connection to insurrection in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras. No discussion of whether "self-determination" is accomplished by allowing self-picked dictators to

*Continued on page 87*



# BEAUCOUP COUPS

## Colonel Robert Denard — 20th Century's Most Successful Merc

Text & Photos by Al J. Venter

**C**OLONEL Robert — only a handful of intimates call him Bob — Denard is not every professional fighting man's idea of a soldier.

A French freebooter, veteran of campaigns in North Africa, the Congo, a brief spell with UNITA in Angola, Yemen, two coups d'état in the Comoros Archipelago and an abortive attempt at revolution in Benin, *le Colonel* Denard is also a mercenary. Possibly the best soldier of fortune of this era, since he has proved himself so successful at it.

On the night of Saturday, 13 May 1978, Denard and 46 of his "military technicians," dressed in black uniforms with dark woollen caps pulled down over their heads, slipped ashore on a beach just north of Moroni, capital of Grand Comoro. In a well-planned and coordinated attack that lasted rather less than two hours, this elite force, mainly French but including five Belgians and a German, achieved their objective.

From Lagengete Beach they managed to capture the main army barracks at Camp Voidjou, and the gendarmerie guarding the palace of President Ali Soilih with his retinue and harem.

Denard's force suffered no casualties. Fewer than a dozen islanders were killed, most of them in Camp Voidjou in the first assault. All resistance ceased when Denard's deputy, Major Guy Cardinal, who was responsible for the second-phase operation, warned those troops holding out that if they did not surrender he would turn the flame thrower on them. They all immediately came out with their hands in the air. Their surprise turned to disgust when they disco-

### OUR MAN IN AFRICA

Al J. Venter has been SOF's man about Africa for more than a decade, first as African correspondent and subsequently as contributing editor. He has authored innumerable articles for SOF and other publications, and more recently has produced a series of video documentaries, some of which have appeared on PBS.

vered that there was no flame thrower.

What is significant about the attack is that it took place at all, considering the totally inadequate weapons at the disposal of Denard and his men. Between them the 46 men had 25 Remington Brushmaster 12-gauge, sawed-off shotguns and 25 Beretta shotguns. There were also four Winchester .458 rifles of the type used by big game hunters in Africa. Not a single grenade.

Colonel Denard must have raised eyebrows when he placed his first advertisements in French newspapers, including *Le Figaro*. He was looking for about 50 tough professional soldiers who had seen action with an airborne unit. The advertisement called for men "with excellent military backgrounds to help survey and exploit oil resources abroad," but that subterfuge had been used 20 years before in the Congo. Security was therefore tight.

The men were offered about \$4,000 for a couple of months work. He had a thousand answers within a week, most of them from ex-convicts and psychopaths. In his weed-ing out he was assisted by two tough French

officers, Major Cardinal and Captain Philippe Gérard, both of whom had been on a failed Benin operation, which had probably been betrayed from the inside. These were professional soldiers who knew Denard and understood the risks entailed in the Comoros enterprise.

Denard had considered arriving in the Comoros by aircraft, but in the end he decided against it. Fifty men in one aircraft leaving for an unknown destination would have alerted the authorities in a dozen countries, especially if Denard himself were among them, and they would have to fly over Africa. This would preclude the element of surprise he needed.

So he bought a 30-year-old *chalutier*, a fishing trawler, the *Athénée*, for \$75,000, and modified her to take 46 mercenaries for the voyage around the Cape into the Indian Ocean. It would be a long haul.

Meanwhile Denard, as astute a planner as ever, actually signed a contract with an Argentinian company to search for oil off the Argentine coast.

He also augmented his armory with other necessary supplies, including walkie-talkies, magnesium signal flares, three rubber boats (including a Zodiac inflatable) and several 50-horsepower outboards with mufflers. These were all to be used once they were off Lagengete Beach to land the force there.

The raid from Lagengete Beach was the second time that *le Colonel* had carried out a coup on the Comoros.

Previously, on 6 July 1975, the Comoran Parliament had declared a form of unilateral independence from France and had installed a local leader, Ahmed Abdallah, as head of

state. France was not altogether happy with this démarche, since the Comoros, although impoverished and with an income per head of about \$150 a year, even now retains a certain strategic importance due to its location. The islands lie at the northern end of the Mozambique Channel, between Africa and Madagascar, and it is through this narrow passage that almost all the oil destined for Europe passes from the Persian Gulf.

The man who replaced Abdallah — with the help of Colonel Denard, and after a discrete time with aging Prince Mohammed Jaffar as figurehead — was Ali Soilih. He soon arranged to have himself elected president, a role which he obviously relished. But the French quickly discovered serious flaws in his character. He had distinctly radical leanings (rather a parody of Chinese Marxism) and liked to think of himself as King of the Islands, although Mayotte, the atoll farthest from Grand Comoro, soon dissociated itself from the coup and chose to remain French, which it still is.

Although raised a devout Muslim, Soilih soon took to drink and drugs, legalizing marijuana. Within a few months he had issued several idiotic decrees which included nationalization of all fishing resources and promoting teenagers to ministerial positions. And he burnt more than a century's worth of French colonial records in the town square. Everything French, except the language itself, was abolished.

In due course he became downright demented. He decreed that his name should be praised together with that of Allah in the mosques. When the Imams and worshippers refused to obey he sent in troops to kill and maim them. He had a dream in which a man with a dog replaced him (see sidebar), and he had all the dogs on the islands killed. It is said that 60,000 were slaughtered.

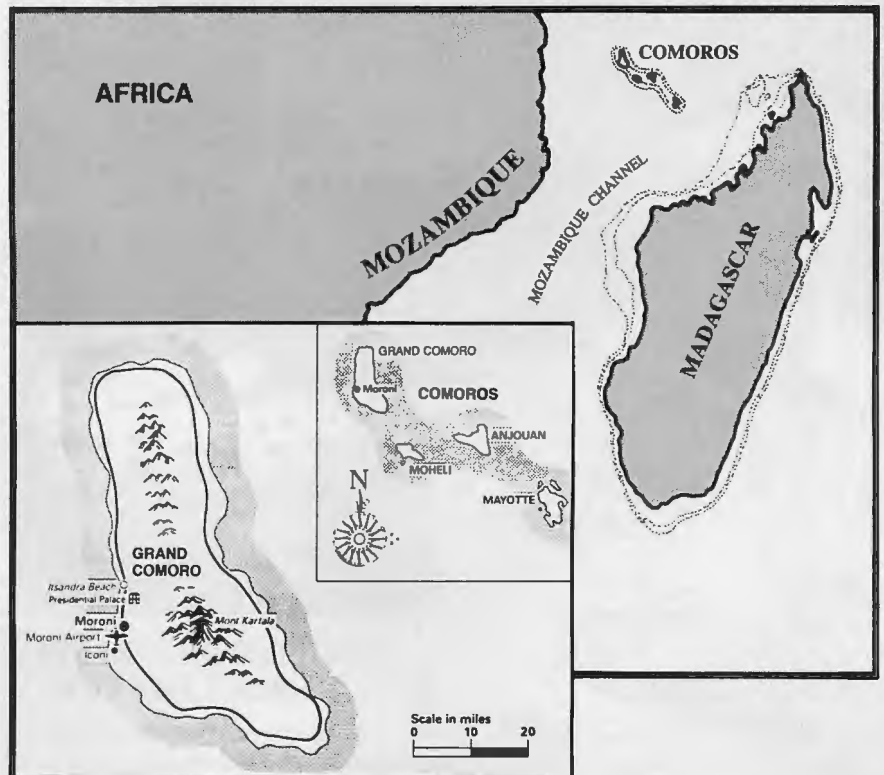
One day, about two years later, Denard received an urgent call from Paris. The man on the line was Ahmed Abdallah, the very man whom he had formerly deposed on behalf of Soilih.

When they met, Abdallah proposed that they should work together to get rid of Ali Soilih and reinstate Abdallah as president. Denard agreed, but said that instead of a flat payment, he wanted a piece of the action. He would himself contribute about half of the \$1.5 million needed for the enterprise.

Thus another revolution was begun and Denard was in action again.

Now, little more than a decade after the second revolt, Bob Denard, a little thicker round the waist, a little gaunter in the face and his hair more silver than grey — but still spry for his years — is still on the island.

His aquiline Gascon features are accentuated by steel-blue eyes, which can still be disconcerting in full glare. His role is now that of a retired gentleman-farmer, a sinecure he appears to relish. He has a small estate in the north of the island on which he lives with his island family; he married one of the ladies of the presidential court not long after the coup. He has also adopted the Muslim faith.



## DOGS OF WAR AND THE DOG OF WAR

As the new president Ali Soilih quickly foundered in his personal morass of drugs, dementia and alcohol, he developed a fixation for Maoist doctrine. One of the features that he copied in a slavish parody was the Youth Brigades — gangs of ignorant young toughs who for the first time in their lives had been given actual authority. Totally illiterate teenagers were promoted to ministerial positions, as the jails swelled with members of the old establishment perceived to be a threat. Roving gangs with no grasp of ideology other than the power of a gun roamed the streets, killing, terrorizing, and raping. These misguided adolescents were to be the tool with which Ali Soilih would build his vision of a great Marxist state. But this unfocused vision was not the only dream Soilih had: one night he dreamed of a

man with a dog who had come to kill him. He awoke trembling and sweating, and after breakfast he issued a presidential decree for the immediate death of all dogs on the Comoros.

Killing the helpless was something his valiant Youth Brigade could manage with aplomb, and they carried out his orders that day, butchering dogs with machetes, dragging them to death behind Land Rovers. It has been reported that some 60,000 were slaughtered.

This, of course, took care of the dogs on the island. Colonel Denard, however, had the foresight to bring with him a dog of his own. A careful and professional planner, he no doubt realized the potential psyops value of showing up to overthrow Soilih in the company of a dog, as Soilih's "vision" had been well publicized thanks to the macabre and draconian slaughter of all Comoran dogs. Thus, Denard landed with a black German Shepherd standing in the bow of his boat.

— Don McLean

I found during my recent visit that any matters of importance are taken care of by the islanders themselves, in conjunction with a powerfully built Belgian military man known only as a Commandant Charles. I met him, too. He displayed ardent eyes, an astute mind and a determination that reminded me of the Colonel himself in the days before he was wounded in the Congo and taken out by Dakota to Salisbury for medical treatment.

As with Denard before him, the decision of Commandant Charles is final in all matters of real importance.

Journalists are certainly not welcome when they appear, as they do from time to time, and are summarily dealt with. Before making a documentary film there, I sent one of my crew, Tim Lambon, to the islands for a preliminary reconnaissance before my arrival. He lasted three days and was put on the next plane out.

My ultimate success in completing the film was entirely due to my previous association with *mon Colonel* in the Congo and elsewhere. Naturally, I was happy to renew the acquaintance.

He imposed only one condition on my



month-long visit: no photographs of himself, Commandant Charles or any other members of the *Garde Président*, the black-uniformed security squad attached to the office of President Ahmed Abdallah. There are about 40 of them, mostly French, although there is also a sprinkling of South Africans.

It was significant that the same kind of black uniform used for the invasion should have been retained, except that now there are several hundred black wearers of the uniform. Apparently, relations between the two groups are not always cordial. In 1985 there was at least one attempt by black members of the *Garde Président* to get rid of the white members. The entire mercenary

**Colonel Bob Denard, leader of mercenary invasions that twice took the Comoros Archipelago for two separate presidents.**

## PROFILE OF A REBEL: ROBERT DENARD

Colonel Robert Denard revealed a distinctive side of his character early in his career, when he was a leading seaman with the French navy.

On active service off the North African coast, he was not happy with an order given by an officer and said so, with great clarity and force. He was thereupon charged with insubordination and reduced to ordinary seaman.

This trait survived all through his military career.

Those who know Robert Denard speak of him with awe, for it is well known that he requires a job to be done only one way — the right way. Denard is never flippant, nor does he tolerate fools gladly. He surrounds himself with the most efficient professionals available.

He is a natural leader of men. Those mercenaries whom he has taken on operations with him have often declared that they would follow him anywhere. Especially when the going is rough. It is significant that the two senior officers whom he chose for the second invasion of the Comoros, after a succession of failures, were Major Guy Cardinal and Captain Philippe Gerard. They both had been with the unsuccessful coup attempt in Benin on the West African coast.

Although that enterprise went badly wrong and lives were lost, they at once threw in their lot with their former commander when he invited them to invade Grand Comoro with a tiny force lacking automatic weapons or rockets or even grenades. They had complete faith in the ability of *le Colonel* to bring off a military campaign against all odds. It also shows the confidence of the man in himself.

It was the same in the Congo, where Denard first came to prominence, although he never won the publicity, or

notoriety, of Mad Mike Hoare.

It was in the Congo where he acquired his reputation for cold-steel bravery. He got into the headlines when, with a small force of French mercenaries, he was able to keep an entire United Nations battalion at bay for days during the battle for Kolwezi, inflicting severe casualties.

There were more actions in various other theaters — Kamina, Stanleyville, and the Angola border.

His force became known by both locals and foreigners as *les Affreux*: The Terrible Ones. But at the same time he acquired a reputation for perfection.

In his day Denard had been a naval gunner, serving in Southeast Asia and the Mediterranean, a legionnaire in Algeria during the anti-colonial atrocities, and a policeman in Morocco (Denard is vague about that period of his life).

He also served as a mercenary in Yemen, Angola (with Savimbi, during the early civil war period), and very briefly in Benin, where his operation was “shopped” from the inside, probably by radical members of the French security system, which is known to be infested by pro-Russian moles.

The Benin debacle was launched from Gabon at the behest of the then *éminence grise* of Franco-African politics, Jacques Focart, the French President's secretary-general in charge of African and Malagasy affairs. Focart was responsible for many of the dirty tricks played against left wing interests in Africa. For a while Denard was one of his hit men.

Not all his ventures were successful. In 1975 he was engaged by President Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire to hire 30 mercenaries to invade the oil-rich province of Cabinda in Angola, just north of the Congo River. The invasion failed and Denard retreated back to Kinshasha.

Then the CIA paid him a half-million dollars to recruit another 20 mercenaries

force was invited to a formal dinner. A snitch revealed that all the tables had been booby trapped with plastic explosives, timed to go off during the meal.

The eight ringleaders of the plot were arrested and executed, after confessing that their backing had been external; the Russians had had a hand in the planning.

After this incident relations with nearby Seychelles and Madagascar, both quasi-Marxist states, became very cool indeed.

Because of the strategic nature and position of the islands, South Africa keeps a close watch on developments in the Comoros. Some believe that Denard is partly

*Continued on page 88*

**Aerial view of Moroni, capital of Grand Comoro and headquarters of the mercenary power behind the throne in the Comoros.**



and provide Jonas Savimbi of Unita with a strike force. The venture lasted a few months before petering out. Savimbi takes orders from no one in his own African backyard, least of all from a white Frenchman who made it clear that he considered Unita should strike at the heart of the enemy, nearer Luanda, and not wait for the enemy to attack them. But since then, Savimbi has employed exactly those tactics with remarkable success.

But the most discouraging fiasco was still to come. In mid-January 1977, Denard, with about 100 men, boarded an unmarked DC-7 at Omar Bongo Airport in Franceville, Gabon.

Their intention was to invade the tiny Marxist state of Benin, formerly Dahomey. This was another harebrained scheme cooked up by the French Secret Service, which seemed highly unlikely to succeed, but Denard went to it with a professional will. Somehow the French had persuaded King Hassan of Morocco and President Bongo of Gabon to take part.

The operation was named Manta, and Denard traveled under the nom de guerre of Colonel Gilbert Bougeaud. He had moved with his group from Morocco, where all the training had taken place. There was also a French SDECE (*Service de Documentation Exterieur et de Contre-Espionnage*) man by the name of Gratien Pognon who had been the Benin ambassador to Brussels. Pognon was to get on the radio and announce the return of Dr. Emil Zinzou and the "Dahomey Liberation Front," once President Mathieu had been taken care of. El Hadj Omar Bongo, President of Gabon, was scheduled to provide a diversionary force from his presidential guard (mostly white mercenaries) to make a strike from neighboring Togo, but this was called off when General Eyadema of Togo got cold feet.

These 92 men captured the airport at Cotonou after a 15-minute battle, having knocked out a tank on the runway with mortars. Leaving a force to secure the airport (an important detail, because if the coup failed, the airport would be their only avenue of retreat), they then moved into the town, having to travel on foot as there were no vehicles on the streets to commandeer at 0700 on a Sunday morning. They met strong resistance from the palace, which came under heavy mortar fire from the mercenaries. Unfortunately, the president was not at the palace. They failed in their attempt to secure the radio station, and after two hours they could advance no further. Government reinforcements arrived and the attackers were obliged to withdraw to the airport with all haste.

The retreat became a rout as civilians with machetes, summoned over the radio by President Kerekou, joined in the attack. Denard and his mercenaries reached their aircraft, but only just. Two of their number were killed and one wounded.

In the rush to get out, Denard was obliged to leave behind his radios, mortars, machine guns and a briefcase containing the real names, addresses, photographs and bank account details of his men. He now admits that it was one of the worst moments of his life. He also admits that he was very lucky to get away without the rickety old DC-7 receiving a direct hit.

They needed all four engines to get off the ground in the sticky tropical heat. If one had been hit they would all have been captured and probably put to death. All in all, it was *not* a coup to be listed in your portfolio if you are looking for merc work.

But if you are good at what you do, work is always available in the fluctuating auction house of Third World African governments. Less than a year after

the Benin incident, Denard was engaged to topple the government of Ali Soilih . . . which he had been engaged to *establish* a year or so before the Benin incident. *C'est la guerre.*

Colonel Bob Denard now leads a quiet life. He will still tell you, "*La guerre, c'est mon metier,*" but he knows that he has fought his last serious campaign. A small operation, perhaps. One that does not need a great deal of physical exertion. But nothing big.

His body has taken some punishment during his seven campaigns; he has been wounded five times and walks with a limp. But you can see nothing of the head scar that he got in the Congo, which was mended in Salisbury, in what was then Rhodesia.

Meeting him again recently (the last time had been at the Regina Hotel in Kinshasa in the late '60s) I found a pleasant, quiet spoken and precise person whom I would not have looked at twice if he had sat next to me on an aircraft from Paris. He listened carefully to my questions, and answered clearly and articulately in lucid French. I was aware that he understood English perfectly, but some Frenchmen make a practice of always replying in their own language; it gives them time to think.

Although the sun was at its height, he was neatly dressed in a light-blue linen suit, as was Commandant Charles. We were probably the only three people wearing ties on Grand Comoro that day. Traditions die hard in a former French colony.

Although it is more than a decade since Bob has heard a shot fired in anger, he still has the bearing of a fighting man; as if he had come back from battle yesterday. It is impossible not to respect and like this old warrior.

And, I'm pretty sure we haven't heard altogether the last of a French military man by the name of Bob Denard.

SOF COUNTERTERRORISM

# DEFANGING THE SERPENT



Butler

# Israeli Commandos Terminate PLO Terror Chief

by Neil C. Livingstone and David Halevy

Illustration by Ralph Butler

ON the night of 9-10 April 1973, Israel conducted a raid on Beirut, known as Operation Spring Youth, that helped solidify that nation's reputation as a special-operations superpower. Some 30 Israeli commandos disembarked from missile boats in Zodiac rafts and landed on a beach near Beirut. The first two teams linked up with Mossad agents who had slipped into the city earlier and climbed into vehicles that had been leased from Avis.

One team went to an apartment house in West Beirut and killed Black September leader Abu Youssef and his deputy Kemel Adwan, along with Palestinian poet Kamal Nasser, the PLO's chief spokesman in Beirut. Meanwhile the second team blew up the headquarters of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP). A third team, which had landed further down the beach and was commanded by the present Israeli defense attaché in Washington, Amos Yaron, destroyed a Black September ordnance center, which included a car bomb workshop.

As the Israelis withdrew back toward the beach, they continued to meet heavy resistance. Although the operation was supposed to be covert, and hence deniable, the Israelis were forced to send in helicopters to evacuate casualties and to drop spikes and caltrops on the roads to delay pursuit.

Fifteen years later, on 10 April 1988, a large memorial ceremony was planned at a Negev Desert kibbutz for the two Israeli soldiers killed in the raid. The principal speaker at the event was supposed to be Major General Amnon Shahak, the chief of Israel's military intelligence organization

## DOCUMENTING JIHAD'S DEMISE

Neil C. Livingstone is adjunct professor at Georgetown University and an authority on terrorism and national defense issues. He has written numerous articles and books on those subjects, his most recent effort being *Beyond the Iran-Contra Crisis: The Shape of U.S. Counter-Terrorism Policy in the Post-Reagan Era*, published by Lexington Press. He and M.K. Pilgrim authored "Spetsnaz Invades America" (SOF, January '88).

David Halevy is a 19-year veteran correspondent with *Time Magazine* and former member of Israeli special operations forces. He is also in the Israeli army reserves.



With six Mossad agents operating under cover in Tunisia, Israeli commandos departed from home port for Tunis aboard four missile boats, ostensibly to conduct naval maneuvers in international waters south of Crete. About 1,800 meters from the Tunisian shore, five Zodiac rafts with dark-clad commandos sped toward the sandy beach, while the missile boats withdrew to a position just outside international waters.

AMAN. In 1973, as a lieutenant colonel, he had commanded one of the raiding parties.

On the day of ceremony, however, General Shahak called to say he was too busy and would be unable to attend. He said that Colonel Yigal Presler, a lieutenant during the Beirut raid and now the prime minister's top terrorism advisor, would take his place.

At the banquet dinner on the kibbutz that evening, Col. Presler paid tribute to the men who had carried out the audacious raid. Operation Spring Youth was a great success, he said, and should serve as a model for effective anti-terrorist operations in the future. He also stressed that future operations of this type should not be openly acknowledged by Israel, even if Israeli involvement was an open secret.

Three days later, on 13 April, the IDF (Israel Defense Forces) weekly magazine *Bamachne* published an interview with Gen. Shahak that quoted him as saying: "I do believe that [commando] raids are highly successful. They have a highly deterrent impact on terrorists and therefore I regard them as a highly important tool. I don't think that we at the IDF have stopped thinking about them or that we will stop conducting them."

His words were extremely prophetic. At the time the interview was published, an Israeli raiding party aboard four corvette-

class missile boats was two days away from the coast of Tunisia. Its mission: to kill Kalil Ibrahim Machmud al-Wazir, better known as Abu Jihad, the PLO's chief of military operations.

General Shahak could not be at the kibbutz on 10 April because he had been deeply involved in preparations for the raid.

## Master of Terror

Ironically, it was Operation Spring Youth that first brought Abu Jihad to power. He was appointed chief of military operations of the PLO to succeed the late Abu Youssef. A brilliant and ruthless man, Abu Jihad had waged an unrelenting war against Israel and other Western targets from 1973 until his death. Terrorism was nothing new to him. Together with PLO leader Yasir Arafat, he had helped plan and execute the first *Fatah* terrorist strikes against Israel in the 1960s.

The list of terrorist operations personally planned and supervised by Abu Jihad includes the attack on the Israeli border town of Nahariyah in June 1974, which left four Israelis dead and six wounded; the hostage-taking episode at the Savoy Hotel in downtown Tel Aviv in March 1975 (22 Israelis killed and wounded); the hijacking of an Israeli bus in March 1978, which resulted in the deaths of 33 Israeli civilians and 82 wounded; the murder of two Israeli sailors in Barcelona, Spain, in September 1985; and most recently the seizure of a bus near the Dimona nuclear facility in which three Israelis were killed and another three wounded.

His boldest terrorist operation, however, occurred in April 1985, when he attempted to strike at the very heart of the Israeli defense establishment with his own raid modeled on Operation Spring Youth. He dispatched a ship from Algeria with 20 Palestinian commandos and crew of eight on board. The raiding party was supposed to leave the "mother ship" on high-speed rafts and land on a popular beach near Tel Aviv. From there it was to make its way to the Israeli defense complex in the heart of the city, storm the building, and take as many hostages as possible. Once inside the defense complex, its most important mission was to locate and kill Israeli Defense Minister Yitzak Rabin.

The Israelis, however, intercepted and sank the ship, pulling only eight survivors from the water. Although the mission failed, the attempt to kill Rabin represented a violation of an unwritten code against targeting the top leadership of either side. Since Abu Jihad was, for all intents and purposes, Rabin's counterpart, his involvement in the plot against Rabin made him fair game in Israeli eyes.

The actual decision to kill Abu Jihad was the result of a number of factors, however. First, he was seen as an increasingly powerful force in the PLO and Arafat's most likely successor. The Israelis reckoned that he would be a far more formidable opponent than Arafat. Second, there was deepening concern in Israel's intelligence community over the emerging alliance between the PLO and the radical Shi'ite terrorist organization, *Hizbollah*. Third, the PLO had stepped up military operations against Israel itself, and the Israelis were looking for a way to strike back at the operational structure of the PLO.

Finally, Abu Jihad's fate was sealed when it was learned that he was playing a crucial role in the *Intifada*, the 1988 uprising on the West Bank and in the Gaza strip. Although the *Intifada* was spontaneous in its origins, Abu Jihad had moved quickly to consolidate his control over the violence. He funneled orders and money to his lieutenants in the occupied territories, sometimes speaking to his operatives on the West Bank directly by telephone. The calls were routed through a switchboard in Geneva in an attempt to escape Israeli eavesdropping.

The Israelis were alarmed. They knew that Abu Jihad already was planning the evolution of the revolt to its third and "final" stage, which involved setting up a shadow government in the occupied territories. This, the authorities realized, could make the occupied territories ungovernable. As the first step toward this goal, he had destroyed the well-established Israeli informer network in the West Bank and Gaza.

So the decision was made by Israel's top leadership to kill Abu Jihad. Still, nothing would have happened had not the right opportunity presented itself. In late February or early March, an informant inside the PLO provided the Israelis with precise information concerning Abu Jihad's movements. With that information in hand, all that remained was to set the trap.

#### Intelligence Requirements

Any successful military operation re-

**Khalil Wazir (center), better known as Abu Jihad, flanked by loyalist guerrillas carrying AKM and Hungarian AMD-65 assault rifles in East Lebanon, 1983. As Yasir Arafat's chief of military operations and second-in-command for the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), he waged unrelenting war against Israel and other Western targets from 1973 until his death. He had also helped plan and execute the first Fatah terrorist strikes against Israel in the 1960s. Israeli commandos finally brought his reign of terror to an end in April 1988. Photo: AP/Wide World**

quires precise operational intelligence. In this regard, the Israelis had been engaged in extensive intelligence collection in North Africa since the early 1950s. Israel's first prime minister and defense minister, David Ben-Gurion, had conceived of a strategy designed to flank the Arab confrontation states by establishing close ties with Turkey (behind Syria and Lebanon), Iran (behind Jordan and Iraq), and Ethiopia (behind Egypt and the Sudan). During this period, North Africa was still under colonial domination, but as the nations of the region became independent Israel moved quickly to initiate secret relations with each of them.

Israel maintained low-level secret relations with both King Idris of Libya and the Moroccan monarchy. Gradually Morocco became the launching pad for Israeli reconnaissance missions throughout North Africa and the rest of the Arab world. Israel's relationship with Morocco peaked during the mid-1960s, when the Israelis helped form the modern Moroccan intelligence service,

based on the Mossad model. They also assisted in the establishment of the Moroccan internal security service, a carbon copy of the Israeli Shin Bet, and provided training to the Moroccan army and air force. The relationship was so close that the Israelis actually established an armor school in Morocco and an advanced training program for Moroccan pilots.

From 1966 to 1975, 30 Mossad agents and armed forces advisors were permanently stationed in Morocco, and Israel's annual intelligence expenditures in northwest Africa ranged between \$12 and \$20 million, all reimbursed to Israel by the CIA. After Moroccan-Israeli relations began to cool in the early 1970s, the Israelis simply went underground, maintaining covert stations throughout the Maghreb region (Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria, and Libya). Because Morocco and Tunisia were relatively open societies, intelligence collection efforts in those countries were extremely productive. After Muammar Khadaffi came to power in



Libya in 1969, the Israelis stepped up intelligence activities against Libya, which threatened to become a hostile "front-line" state.

After the PLO was driven from Beirut in 1982 and relocated in Tunis, the Tunisian capital, Israel launched a crash program to upgrade its intelligence resources there. Mossad agents, disguised as tourists or European businessmen, regularly visited Tunisia. "Branch offices" of European companies controlled by the Mossad were opened in Tunis. Tunisian citizens and even members of the government were recruited by the Mossad. Some knew who they were working for; others believed they were assisting European or American intelligence organizations.

At the same time, Israeli military intelligence targeted Tunisia for intensified operational intelligence that could be used in future military operations. Members of Flotilla 13, Israel's elite naval commandos, regularly mapped Tunisian beaches and other landing sites, surveyed the country's

naval facilities and naval warning systems, and monitored the activities of the Tunisian navy (which consists of one frigate, six fast-attack craft, and assorted patrol boats). Israeli army commandos from the Sayaret Matkal (approximately the Israeli equivalent of Delta Force) frequently penetrated deep into Tunisia, surveying roads, airports, and targets like the PLO headquarters. They also collected intelligence on the Tunisian army (composed of six armor, mechanized, and reconnaissance brigades) and police operations. The IDF monitoring service, Israel's counterpart of the super-secret U.S. National Security Agency, eavesdropped on all Tunisian and PLO communications.

Although they already had the most extensive intelligence files in existence on the PLO, the Israelis decided to reconstruct their profile of the organization and its activities from scratch. As part of this project, a special task force concentrating on the top leadership of the PLO was established. One

group focused exclusively on Abu Jihad. His every move, meeting, trip, and call were recorded and analyzed. Files were prepared on all of his close associates; his house and neighborhood were surveyed and carefully mapped, and every element of his behavior was analyzed.

By mid-1985, the Israelis had an extensive network in Tunisia, including agents, local support, safe houses, weapons caches, and a clandestine communications system. They also had an extraordinary amount of highly detailed intelligence about the PLO and an extensive working knowledge of Tunis and its environs. This information was put to good use after three Israelis were killed aboard a yacht in Cyprus. In retaliation, Israeli F-16s bombed the building that served as the headquarters and barracks for Force 17, Arafat's personal praetorian guard, which was responsible for the killings. Real-time Israeli intelligence was so good that eight minutes before the fighters began their attack, the general staff war room in Tel Aviv was alerted that Yasir Arafat and Abu Tayeb, the commander of Force 17, had just left the building.

The Israeli air force commander informed Yitzhak Rabin, the minister of defense, that they could re-target Arafat and Tayeb, even at the last minute. But Rabin decided to go ahead with the original plan, because any last-minute change of target would increase both the risk to the Israeli aviators and to innocent Tunisian civilians. The Force 17 building subsequently was leveled by the Israeli planes.

In preparation for the killing of Abu Jihad, the Israelis relied extensively on their knowledge of Tunisia and the PLO. In late March, all Israeli agents were pulled out of Tunisia so as to avoid unnecessary risks or accidental disclosure of the operation. It would also prevent them from being "blown" if the Tunisians got lucky and discovered what was going on. During the second week of April, a Mossad team that would function as part of the operation, composed of six men and one woman, entered the country, using a variety of carefully developed and nearly infallible cover identities. They quickly and efficiently set up their operation base and retrieved a number of weapons from a hidden depot.

So that he could get a firsthand look at the situation on the ground, the commander of the Sayaret Matkal flew to Tunis on a commercial flight from Rome, using a genuine passport and identity papers that would provide him with, at best, short-lived cover. He was met at the airport by the Mossad team leader, and together they drove to Abu Jihad's house in an exclusive suburb of Tunis. It was located on a hill approximately 1,500 feet from the sea. After surveying the house and the quiet neighborhood, they went on to the landing site that had been chosen for the Israeli commandos. It was a deserted beach near Ras Carthage, once the port of the ancient city of Carthage. The following morning, having assured himself that all was in order, the Sayaret Matkal







Outside view of Abu Jihad's house in Tunis suburb of Sidi Boseid the day after Israeli commandos raided the residence on 16 April 1988, killing him with 70 rounds of automatic weapons fire. AP/Wide World

commander left Tunis and returned to Israel via Europe. He would be back in Tunisia in less than a week, this time in command of the men who would kill Abu Jihad.

#### Final Preparations

In early April 1988, a final, full-dress rehearsal was conducted near the Israeli port city of Haifa, which brought together all of the operational elements of the mission. Israeli commandos landed on a beach in the vicinity of Haifa and traversed a route *approximating the one* they would take in Tunis to a mockup of Abu Jihad's house, which had been built on an Israeli army ordnance base. In order to make the rehearsal as realistic as possible, the planners actually moved hangers and roads on the base to better simulate the approaches to the house. So that Soviet and American spy satellites would not recognize it, the final touches were added to the model and the exercise was conducted during a window when no satellites were overflying Israel. Every member of the A Team — the force that would do the actual killing — was issued a three-dimensional scale model of Abu Jihad's house to help familiarize them with the layout. During the rehearsal, the Sayaret Matkal A Team "blew" the front door of the house, "killed" Abu Jihad and exited the house in 22 seconds flat, well under the limit set by the mission planners. Unbelievably, during the actual raid the

team would shave nine seconds off its best rehearsal time.

Few people realize how difficult and complex most successful special operations raids are. Even though the goal was to kill one man, the operation required the energies of literally hundreds, if not thousands, of Israelis.

In addition to the Mossad agents already in Tunis, the actual raiding party included naval commandos from Flotilla 13, who would secure the beach near Ras Carthage, and approximately 30 Sayaret Matkal commandos tasked with killing Abu Jihad.

The commandos would be transported to and from Tunisia on four corvette-class missile boats, two Sa'ar 4.5s and two Sa'ar 4s. The Sa'ar 4.5s are code named Chochit by the Israeli navy. One carried two U.S.-made Cobra gunships, which could be used in the event the raiding party needed help. It would also serve as the operational headquarters for the mission. On board would be Major General Ehud Barak, the IDF's chief of operations, the Mossad's deputy director of operations, and the chief of naval operations, who would be in direct command of

the naval component. The other Sa'ar 4.5 was outfitted with a full hospital and surgical facility, as well as a specially-designed Bell 206 helicopter capable of evacuating casualties in an emergency.

As a small nation where virtually everyone knows everyone else, or at least a mutual friend, the Israelis are unusually sensitive to the issue of casualties. Every military death is felt throughout Israel. To treat possible casualties, two of Israel's finest doctors — a surgeon and an anesthesiologist — were called back to active reserve duty to assist the army medical team that would be aboard the second Sa'ar 4.5. They participated in all of the rehearsals and pre-raid exercises. Luckily, the most serious medical problem they had to deal with was the seasickness of some of the commandos on the long voyage to and from Tunisia.

The two Sa'ar 4s would carry the commandos and actually penetrate Tunisian territorial waters. In addition to their usual complement of sailors, communications specialists, document analysts, Mossad operatives, and other specialists who might be needed in an emergency would be on board the ships. The Mossad chief communications specialist was a man who had lived under deep cover in the Maghreb for many years.

Overhead would be two Boeing 707s, one a flying headquarters and the other an airborne reconnaissance and electronic warfare platform. On board the headquarters craft (identification number 4X-007) would be the chief of the Israeli air force, Major General Avihu Ben-Nun, who would coordinate all air activity with General Barak. This plane would also serve as a relay station, transmitting the action on the ground to the War Room in the Israeli defense complex in Tel Aviv. In this way, Tel Aviv would be able to stay in direct contact with the commandos on the ground. The Mossad director and his military intelligence counterpart, Major General Shahak of the Israeli military intelligence organization AMAN, would be aboard the other 707 (identification number 4X-497), coordinating the flow of intelligence. Two flying tankers, also Boeing 707s, would be positioned over the Mediterranean to refuel the airborne contingent, and four F-15 fighters would be in the vicinity to provide air support to the 707s.

During the raid, the Sayaret Matkal commandos would wear black, fireproof coveralls, paladium boots, and lightweight utility vests made of bullet-resistant fabric. Each commando would be equipped with a miniature radio pack, with earphone and microphone, and an emergency location finder, in case he was captured or separated from his unit. The flying headquarters had sensors on board able to pinpoint an activated location finder and direct help to the individual in need. Each man also carried a first aid kit, a knife, and extra ammo.

All of the weapons used in the raid were Israeli manufactured, in contrast to many special operations conducted by the Israelis in which captured East-bloc weapons were used to increase deniability. All of the serial

numbers and other markings, however, were removed. Similarly, all of the ammunition also was Israeli but bore no markings. Teams A and B were outfitted with silenced UZI submachine guns, and some team members carried .22 Beretta pistols, which were also suppressed. For added firepower and range, teams C and D carried Galil assault rifles and light machine guns. Most of the men also had stun grenades and number 24 and 26 fragmentation hand grenades slung from their utility vests.

### The Operation

Under cover of darkness, the missile boats were loaded in Israel with the equipment that would be needed on the raid. The first two boats got underway at dawn, allegedly for the purpose of conducting naval maneuvers south of Crete. The second set of boats departed some 60 hours later, after sundown, with the commandos on board.

Although Israeli intelligence intercepted a message on 14 April, in which the French warned the PLO that the Israelis were up to something, Gen. Barak decided to continue with the mission. He was counting on both the unspecific nature of the warning and on PLO inertia to prevent the Palestinians from taking effective countermeasures.

Shortly after nightfall on 15 April, the Israeli flotilla rendezvoused just outside of Tunisian territorial waters, beyond the reach of Tunisia's coastal radar. There was no negative intelligence coming in from any quarter, and the "Go!" order was given.

The two Sa'ar 4 missile boats with the commandos on board pulled away, provided with an electronic cloak by one of the 707s high overhead. They continued through the Gulf of Tunis until the coast of Tunisia loomed 1,600-1,800 meters away. The missile boats cut power, and two pairs of frogmen from Flotilla 13 slipped over the side of one of vessels into the dark, choppy waters. Aided by Swimmer Delivery Vehicles, known as pigs, they quickly made their way through the breaking waves to the deserted beach where they made contact with the Mossad team, which was waiting for them.

The high-flying 707 off the coast was in contact with the Mossad agents on the beach. Before the Zodiacs with the Sayaret Matkal commandos were launched, the frogmen were required to link up with their Mossad counterparts on the beach, make positive identification, and send back a coded signal to land the main force. Far behind the first 707 was the flying headquarters, which was relaying all communications from the operation back to Tel Aviv. Some distance away from the Tunisian coast, the F-15s, already having once refueled, were standing by to protect the 707s.

The "all clear" signal was transmitted to the missile boats, and within seconds five Zodiac rafts hit the water. Their engines were cranked up, and they sped away toward the beach, loaded with heavily-armed, dark-clad commandos. As they approached the sandy beach, the commandos jumped out of the Zodiacs and dragged them to high



**Abu Jihad's coffin carried by Tunisian officers en route from Tunis suburb of Soukra to the airport. In left foreground is youngest grandson of Abu Jihad, three-year-old Jihad Halil al Wazir, carried by unidentified relative. Photo: AP/Wide World**

ground. The missile boats, meanwhile, withdrew to a position just outside of Tunisia's territorial waters to await the return of the raiders.

The commandos piled into three vehicles rented by the Mossad agents: a Peugeot 305 (license number 66TI2505), and two Volkswagen minibuses (license numbers 328TI48 and 8405TI53). The naval commandos were left behind to hide the rafts among the palm trees just beyond the beach and to secure the beachhead.

### Abu Jihad's Rendezvous with Death

Abu Jihad's neighborhood, a suburb of Tunis known as Sidi Buseid, is popular with top PLO leaders, and as a consequence is usually crawling with security men of one description or another. The PLO's chief of intelligence, Abu el-Chol (Halil Abdul Hamid) lived across the street from Abu Jihad, and Abu Massin (Machmud Abbas), the PLO member responsible for the dialogue with the Israeli left, resided next door.

A few minutes after 0100, the commandos arrived at Abu Jihad's house and joined the Mossad operatives who had been keeping the house and neighborhood under constant surveillance. Everything was quiet, but contrary to expectations, Abu Jihad was not at home. He was downtown attending a lengthy meeting with PLO external relations official Farouk Kadumi regarding the controversial U.S. decision to close down the office of the PLO mission to the United Nations.

The commandos had no choice but to await his return. One team, their faces blackened, took up positions in the shadows and foliage around the house. Other teams

secured the escape route and surrounding streets leading to the house. Members of A Team, who would kill the PLO leader, checked their equipment one last time and pulled on their night vision goggles to get adjusted to them. To ensure that no one would sound the alarm if their presence was discovered, the Mossad operatives had tapped into the phone lines leading in and out of the neighborhood and could block any calls they didn't want to get through. In case anyone accidentally picked up their communications, the commandos spoke to each other in French or Arabic.

The minutes dragged by slowly, the tension mounting with every passing second. Finally, at 0130, Abu Jihad returned home, tailed by Mossad agents. He immediately went into the house, while his security detail parked his car and took up their positions. The Israeli plan of operation called for the commandos to wait until Abu Jihad went to bed before launching their attack. The assault party continued to wait. After nearly an hour, the light went out in Abu Jihad's first-floor study.

Seconds later, a second-floor light came on. More minutes went by. Then, *suddenly*, the light was extinguished. The house was plunged into darkness. Nothing in the neighborhood stirred. It was time to act.

D Team was deployed a short distance from the house to guard the approaches to it. Members of C Team took up positions near both the front and back of the house from which they could intervene in the event that more firepower or other assistance was needed. While B Team moved around to the rear entrance of the house, A Team approached the front door. A member of A Team slipped stealthily up to Abu Jihad's parked car in the drive. The driver was snoring peacefully behind the wheel. One shot from a silenced pistol ensured that he

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SOF TERRORISM

# MOST DANGEROUS MAN IN THE WORLD

## Is Abu Nidal the Next Target for Israel's Vengeance?

by Neil C. Livingstone & David Halevy

HE is considered by many to be the most dangerous man in the world. And he is on the move again. No one knows where he will strike next, but it's a good bet that his target will be either American or Israeli. He is Abu Nidal, and his name is synonymous with terror.

During his congressional testimony, Oliver North read from a newspaper describing Abu Nidal as "the world's most wanted terrorist." According to North, "When you look at his whole career, Abu Nidal makes the infamous terrorist Carlos look like a Boy Scout." North cited State Department figures stating that Abu Nidal and his followers, "who number an estimated 500, have killed as many as 181 persons and wounded more than 200 in two years."

It was a death threat from Abu Nidal that prompted North to take a security fence from a former CIA friend of General Richard Secord in order to provide some protection to his family during his frequent absences. The government, however, told him there was nothing that could be done to protect the family of an official at his level. "I'll be glad to meet Abu Nidal on equal terms anywhere in the world," North told the congressional investigators, in what was perhaps his most riveting testimony. "But I am not willing to have my wife and my four children meet Abu Nidal or his organization on his terms," he added.

But who is Abu Nidal, and why did his name fill even a man like Oliver North with trepidation? Where is he today, and what is he likely to do next?

### Profile of a Terrorist

Sabri Khalil al-Bana, better known as Abu Nidal, was born in 1940 (or 1937 according to other sources) in Jaffa, in what was then Palestine. He was one of 11 children. His father was a devout Moslem and prosperous businessman, who owned more than 6,000 acres of orchards, including orange groves in Ashkelon, Yavneh, and

Kfar Sabba. The al-Bana family lived in a 20-room house (which was later converted into an Israeli police station) in the Ajami section of Jaffa. Ironically, until his death, Sabri's father, Haj Khalil al-Bana, was a close friend of Israel's first president, Chaim Weizmann, and of the founder of the Hagana (the Jewish underground army), Avraham Shapira. Mohammed al-Bana, one of Sabri's brothers, is one of the largest fruit and vegetable merchants on the occupied West Bank and is known to enjoy cordial relations with the Israeli government. According to Mohammed, he remembers "as a boy twice visiting the Weizmann house in Rehovot."

As a young man, Sabri al-Bana led a privileged existence. He was driven to and from school in a chauffeur-driven car, which was virtually unheard of in those days. But following the bitter struggle that accompanied the establishment of the state of Israel in 1948, all of the al-Bana family orchards and property in Israel were declared "properties of absentees" and taken over by the Israeli government.

Suddenly, Sabri al-Bana was just one more stateless Palestinian refugee. His father had died in 1945, and the task of supporting the family fell to his older brothers. The family moved first to Nablus, and later to Beirut, Lebanon (in the mid-1950s). Despite the loss of their lands in Israel, the family had been able to save much of its wealth, including homes in Beirut, Damascus, Nablus, Marseilles, and Istanbul. Since their wealth was intact, Sabri never had to live in a refugee camp but went to school in East Jerusalem, where he studied, among other things, English and French.

There are unconfirmed reports that Sabri

attended American University in Beirut. What is known is that in 1955 he subsequently matriculated at Cairo University for two years, studying to become a mechanical engineer. Without completing his degree, he returned to Nablus and taught in a local school. But he soon yearned for the excitement and challenges of a broader world. In 1960, he journeyed to Saudi Arabia and was hired as an electrician's assistant by a construction company. He married a young woman, also from Nablus, and fathered three children: two daughters and a son named Nidal. It did not take him long to become involved in radical Palestinian politics, and shortly after Yasir Arafat's *Fatah* was founded in 1964, he joined up and adopted the nom de guerre "Abu Nidal" (Father of the Struggle).

It was not until after the disastrous Arab defeat in the Six Day War in 1967, however, that he began to devote his whole life to the Palestinian cause. Like so many other young Palestinians, he concluded that the Arab armies were not going to be able to liberate Palestine, and that the Palestinians would have to take their destiny into their own hands. A rising star, by 1970 he had become a member of the PLO executive committee, and shortly thereafter was sent to the Sudan as the PLO's "ambassador." It was during his time in Khartoum that he first began to secretly recruit young Palestinians for his own covert fighting unit.

In 1971, he left his post in Khartoum and went to Baghdad as the PLO's chief representative to Iraq, a country that was one of the most outspoken proponents of the Palestinian cause. Once in Baghdad, he continued to develop his own organization and openly advocated a more aggressive PLO strategy, calling for stepped-up violence against Israel and its allies.

In September 1973, he began to put his philosophy into action. With the help of the Iraqi government, a group of armed Pales-

stinian fighters from one of Abu Nidal's training camps near Baghdad traveled to Paris and seized the Saudi Arabian embassy. Four months later, Abu Nidal broke with Arafat, whom he accused of being too conservative and of undermining Palestinian aspirations. He formed the Fatah Revolutionary Council (FRC) and declared his intention to kill Arafat. Arafat, in turn, allegedly had Abu Nidal condemned to death in absentia. In the years that followed, his organization became more popularly known as Black June, although at one time or another he has also operated under names such as Black September, the Arab Revolutionary Brigades, and the Revolutionary Organization of Socialist Moslems.

He has given occasional interviews to the media, such as the one in the West German periodical *Der Spiegel*, in which he described himself as, "the evil spirit of the secret services. I am the evil spirit which moves around only at night causing them nightmares." Indeed, he openly acknowledges that he has served as a surrogate, at different times, for the Iraqis, the Syrians and the Libyans.

Intelligence files on Abu Nidal are revealing. One file describes him as, "highly ambitious, with a magnetic personality and extraordinary will power. He always strives to make a powerful impression upon others. He demands blind obedience." In another, he is characterized as "a sycophant and an opportunist with an unlimited lust for power."

#### Master of Mayhem

During the past decade Abu Nidal's name has been linked to scores of terrorist attacks, including the shooting of Shlomo Argov, Israel's ambassador to the United Kingdom, which became the pretext for Israel's 1982 invasion of Lebanon, and the hijacking of an Egyptair jetliner to Malta in 1984. Sixty people lost their lives when Egyptian commandos botched a rescue attempt. In contrast to the State Department figures cited by North in his congressional testimony, U.S. and Israeli intelligence sources indicate that since its inception, Abu Nidal's organization has carried out more than 250 terrorist attacks. In the two-year period from 1983 to 1985 alone, more than 100 terrorist attacks can be linked to Abu Nidal. Of these, 69 were directed at Arab targets, 16 against Israeli targets, and 15 at European targets. Among his 1985 operations were the assassination of West Bank Mayor Fahd Qawasma; an attempt to blow up a Jordanian plane en route to Kuwait; an attack on the offices of the Jordanian national airline, Alia, in Rome; the assassination of a Jordanian diplomat in Ankara; the bombing of a coffee shop in Kuwait; the assassination of a British diplomat in India; an attack on the U.S. embassy in Cairo; and attacks on a Jewish-owned store in Paris and on the El Al office in Amsterdam. His bloodiest operations occurred two days after Christmas, when Palestinian gunmen killed 17 people and injured 115 in coordinated attacks at the airports in Rome and Vienna.

On 5 September 1986, more than 100



people were killed and injured after a Pan Am jumbo jet was hijacked by Abu Nidal terrorists to Karachi, Pakistan. Before the terrorists panicked and opened up on the passengers, they had asked stewardesses to identify those aboard with American passports. The following day, on 6 September, two gunmen employed by Abu Nidal murdered 22 Jewish worshippers in an Istanbul synagogue. The attackers slipped into the synagogue and bolted the door with an iron bar to prevent anyone from escaping. Then they opened up on those inside with Czech-made submachine guns and grenades. In retrospect, it appears that the attack on the synagogue was designed to derail a planned meeting between Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres and Egypt's Hosni Mubarak. Shortly afterwards, Moroccan authorities announced that they had prevented an attack, presumably also involving Abu Nidal, on a synagogue in Morocco.

#### International Ties

Following his alleged break with Arafat, Abu Nidal located his headquarters in Baghdad and for at least a decade enjoyed the support, protection, and funding of the Iraqi government and its strongman, Saddam Hussein. However, after the Iraqi government became embroiled in its protracted war with Iran, it began seeking closer ties with the West. In 1983, under strong U.S. pressure, the Iraqi government told Abu Nidal to pack his bags and leave. He subsequently moved to Damascus, and it was from Syria that he launched most of his bloodiest operations in the mid-1980s. In fact, his headquarters was not far away from the U.S. embassy.

By 1985, Abu Nidal had become too hot for even the Syrians to handle. Because of their increasing isolation from the rest of the international community, the Syrians were forced to take some public steps to indicate that they were reducing their support of international terrorism. Syrian President Hafez Assad personally told Abu Nidal that he and his headquarters would have to leave. Nevertheless, the Syrians indicated their interest in maintaining a direct, covert link to his organization and even provided

Nidal's bloodiest attacks occurred during a coordinated operation at airports in Rome and Vienna, two days after Christmas in 1985, in which Palestinian gunmen murdered 17 people and injured 115. Above shows Rome's Leonardo da Vinci airport with victims of Palestinian grenades and machine-gun fire dead on the floor of the international terminal. Photo: AP/Wide World

him with an official entree to the Khomeini regime in Iran.

It is believed that Abu Nidal has made a number of trips to the Iranian capital in search of funding and support, but to date he reportedly has little to show for his efforts. Instead, in the summer of 1985, he began relocating his headquarters to Tripoli, Libya, along with his family and the families of a number of senior people in his organization. The move reportedly was not without complications, and it took some time for his new headquarters to become fully operational. Since moving to Tripoli, the Libyan government has provided Abu Nidal with forged passports, intelligence data, and training. According to a declassified background cable sent from the secretary of state to all Near Eastern and South Asian U.S. diplomatic posts in early 1986, "There is a case where real Tunisian passports turned up in [an] Abu Nidal-run operation that were lifted by [the] Libyans."

His departure from Syria, far away from the battlefields of the Middle East, and the difficulties involved in establishing a new base of operations in Libya, have forced Abu Nidal to change his tactics. For the first time, his organization has established its own armed militia, called the Abu Nidal Militia, in the Palestinian refugee camps near Beirut and in South Lebanon. This armed militia took part in the most recent battles between rival Palestinian factions in and around Beirut. Promising young recruits are sent either to Libya or to a small base in the northern part of the Bekaa Valley for advanced training, including instruction

Continued on page 98

## FACT & FILM

Continued from page 45

strength to occupy this type of terrain effectively after dark, and ordered a withdrawal to the Yen.

When his troops were once again in the paddies west of Cam Ne, the Viet Cong surfaced from the tunnel complex and reoccupied the tree line. Delta Company again drew fire from Cam Ne. This time the exhausted and frustrated Marines replied with 24 105mm howitzer rounds fired by Delta Battery, 2nd Battalion, 12th Marines, located south of Hill 327, and his own battalion's 81mm mortars.

The Viet Cong fire ceased and the Marines boarded their amtracks. On their way down river to the Phong Le bridge, they once again came under fire from Cam Ne (1) and (5) on the river bank. The VC had returned.

After Delta Company returned to the Phong Le bridge, Capt. West reported that the company had uncovered 267 punji traps, six Malayan whip booby traps, three grenade booby traps, six anti-personnel mines and one multiple booby-trapped hedgerow. They had demolished 51 huts and 38 tunnels, trenches and prepared positions. This all occurred in only one quarter of the village complex.

One of the platoon commanders, Second Lieutenant Ray G. Snyder, stated Cam Ne

was an "extensively entrenched and fortified hamlet."

The battalion commander, Lieutenant Colonel Verle E. Ludwig, explained that "burning was the only way to ensure that the house would not become an active military installation after the troops had moved on past it."

Even *Newsweek* correspondent Francois Sully, during a conversation about Cam Ne with the 9th Marines S-2, Major Charles Ward, said "... breaking up the group and leveling of the village structures were the only feasible actions short of a military assault."

Seven Viet Cong were reported killed, but proof was hard to come by. The VC habitually dragged off their dead, creating a great morale problem for American troops. We could see our casualties, but often could see little damage done to the enemy.

Among the casualties of Cam Ne were four wounded villagers and a dead 10-year-old boy who had been caught in the crossfire of the Marines and Viet Cong during one exchange of gun fire.

Eight days later, on 11 August, while on a sweep of Cam Ne (6), I was walking along a trail on the west side of the village. To my left — on a dike in the rice paddies — was a machine-gun team led by the weapon platoon leader, 2nd Lt. Richard Regan. Three shots rang out from the direction of Cam Ne (3) to our west, and Regan went down, shot through the head. Another shot from Cam

Ne struck the machine-gun ammo bearer, Private First Class Gonzales, penetrating both calves and sending him into the muddy water. My squad dropped to the path and frantically scanned the distant tree line. Some of the squad fired toward a small structure in the distance that would be the most likely sniper position.

Then the sniper made the mistake of moving and I fired a burst from my automatic rifle, knocking him into the rice paddy. Lance Corporal Albert Ekstein fired a white phosphorous rifle grenade which burst over the Viet Cong's body. This was one they wouldn't drag off. Another Marine had died because of Cam Ne.

We would sweep one village, only to receive fire from the next. When we moved there, we would be fired upon by the one we just left.

Was the Cam Ne village visited by Morley Safer a series of fortified hamlets as described by Delta Company? Two weeks later, I found out. After continually receiving fire from Cam Ne (1), (2) and (5) between the day of Delta Company's sweep and 17 August, my battalion, commanded by Lt. Col. George R. Scharnberg, received orders to again clear the hamlets. This time we would hit them with greater strength — four companies instead of one. Two would serve as a blocking force or "anvil," and two would sweep, forming the "hammer." The force was to once again prove insufficient. A gap at the east end of the hamlet

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After moving all night, we were on line and prepared to move by the first signs of daylight on Wednesday morning, 18 August 1965. Before we got the orders to move, helicopters equipped with loudspeakers flew repeatedly over the village with a Vietnamese soldier ordering the villages to leave the hamlet. This was followed by leaflet drops urging the Viet Cong to surrender.

After a trickle of villagers exited Cam Ne, we entered. We had evidently entered from a different direction than that of the original sweep, as I found almost no huts damaged. What I did find was a complex system of tunnels, spider holes, punji pits and trenches. Each house hid bunkers and tunnel entrances. Mines and booby traps filled the village and everywhere we looked we found evidence of VC. At one fence line, two Marines were wounded when a mine exploded that had been booby-trapped to the fence.

We could tell by the cooking fires and items left scattered around that the enemy had withdrawn hastily. The silence and the smoke from the charcoal cooking fires that drifted through the trees added to the eerie feeling that we were walking into a trap. Even the village's animals — pigs, chickens and water buffaloes — were left behind and roamed about freely. The Viet Cong had faded away. But to where?

It took all day to sweep through the hamlet. The heat was unbearable, and the movement slow. Each gate and tree line we came to held trip wires and booby traps. Every path was lined with foot traps filled with poisoned steel spikes. By the time we reached the eastern edge of the village, we were exhausted.

No sooner had we formed a perimeter on the outskirts of the village, occupying a VC trench, than it started. A shot rang out from across the paddies. A young blond Marine 30 meters to my left jerked over backwards, shot in the chest by a sniper. Immediately, more shots followed and within minutes we were in a firefight with what turned out to be a reinforced company of hardcore Viet Cong that had taken up positions across the paddies at Cam Ne (1).

During the firefight that followed, one of our machine gunners, a black corporal, was shot through the lungs and killed instantly. Forty meters to my left, PFC George Reninger saw the sniper that killed the corporal hiding behind a bush in the rice paddy only 200 meters away. He rested his M14 in the crook of a tree and took up the slack of the trigger. The Viet Cong somersaulted into the air and fell into the paddy. More muzzle flashes came from a small temple 400 meters away, and I opened fire on it, peppering the walls and windows with angry 7.62mm hornets. We were now encountering what Delta Company had been up against. Viet Cong fire grew in intensity. Bullets impacted around us, kicking up small bursts of dust and chopping branches from the trees over our heads.

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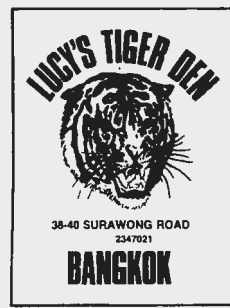


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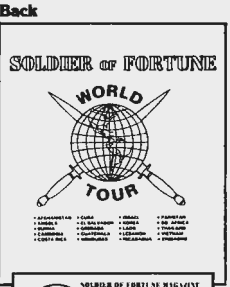
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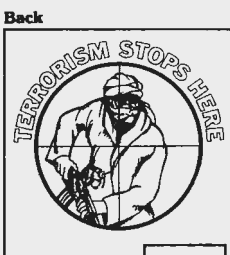
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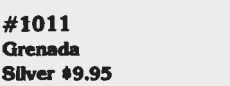
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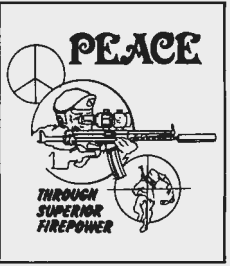
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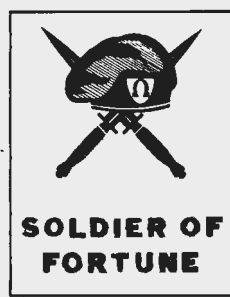
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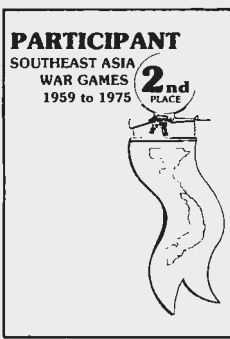
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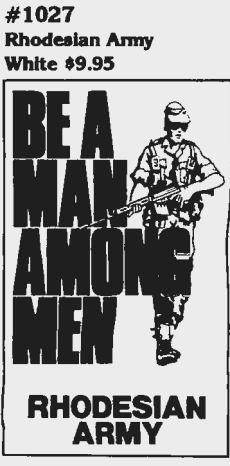
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The captain ordered our FO to call for fire support. The artillery observer studied his map and decided he could best direct the fire from a small point of land that jutted out into the paddies to our front. Signalling his radioman, he moved out.

No one knows exactly what happened next. Even though the first four rounds impacted on target in the trees occupied by the VC, the next four exploded around the FO — one being an air burst over his head. He and his radio operator were knocked out — and with them, the only radio on the artillery frequency.

The barrage then walked down the trench we had occupied. One round impacted near one of our fire team leaders — a Corporal Oller — and almost severed his arm, blowing him through a fence into the rice paddy. The last round impacted eight meters from my position, showering me with sand and dirt.

When the barrage ceased, we crawled from the trench only to be met once more by a high volume of fire from the stubborn guerrillas. Our return fire coupled with several 106mm recoilless rifle rounds discouraged any further action on the part of the VC.

By the time the operation had ended, the battalion had pulled 37 Viet Cong suspects out of the tunnels, destroyed more than 50 bunkers and spider holes, and retrieved documents, rice caches and ammunition.

The next morning we left Cam Ne. But Cam Ne had not seen the last of the Marines. On 17 March 1966, the 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marines under Lt. Col. Joshua W. Dorsey

III, would sweep the Cam Ne complex again. This time the Marines would kill two Viet Cong — at least two who had *not* been dragged off by their comrades — capture 13 suspects, a Viet Cong nurse, two ARVN deserters, and confiscate over a ton of hidden rice. Across the paddies to the southeast, at Duong Son (2), the 2nd Battalion, 9th Marines would kill five more VC and capture many enemy documents.

Did the Marines overreact to the threat at Cam Ne as was the impression left in the minds of the American people? Morley Safer did not report the events that led up to the sweep by 1st Battalion. He did not mention their strike that was called in on the village by the Recon Marines, nor did he show any of the killing devices left for the Marines by the VC or elaborate on the Viet Cong tactic of using the civilian populace as a shield.

Perhaps he didn't know. Perhaps he didn't ask. Perhaps he did not want to confuse his televised presentation with the facts. In any case, what the American public saw in their living rooms 8,000 miles away would be what the media wanted them to see — and think.

Cam Ne was only the beginning. The next eight years would see a proliferation of one-sided, irresponsible reporting by the American press. Those of us in the field, American men and women doing what we were sent to do, never asked for pro-American propaganda. We only asked for fair, truthful and unbiased reporting. When a story is told, it should be the *whole* story.

Today's news becomes tomorrow's history.

Cam Ne. To those of us who were there, it was a well-fortified haven for the enemy. For those who saw two minutes of film on their television sets on Walter Cronkite's *CBS Evening News*, it was the scene of an overbearing American Marine casually and sadistically destroying a peasant's home. It was two minutes of what the American news media wanted to portray the war in Vietnam to be.

It was two minutes at Cam Ne. ✎

## GUAT FIREPOWER

*Continued from page 51*

no attempt was made to hide our presence. Our company-size patrol was broken into two groups, one deploying in the bulrushes along the river and the other moving about 200 meters inland to provide rear security. I stayed with the ambush element and immediately noticed that our position had previously been trampled down and was littered with rusty C-ration cans. Obviously this site had been used by the army many times before. The Gs were bound to know its location and were unlikely to cross right in front of it, especially in broad daylight.

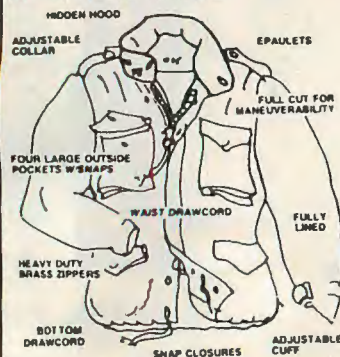
Our position wasn't a good one. We had no cover, and it was difficult to see the river for the foliage to our front. This really didn't matter much as most of the troops just made themselves comfortable and went to sleep.

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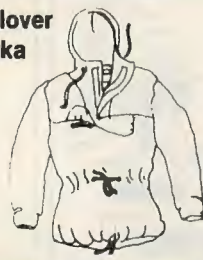
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It was obvious that this was a rest period and no one was very interested in ambushing the enemy. Later, when I questioned the patrol commander (a captain who located himself with the rear security element) about the conduct of the operation, he just smiled and shrugged. The ambush was lifted hours before dark and the patrol spent the night in the rear security position. No attempt was made to conduct a night operation. Second Battalion never attempted night operations while I was with them. When questioned about this, officers explained that command and control were too difficult at night. Really gentlemen? It seems to me that the Gs do it all the time.

My tour of duty with 2nd Battalion lasted about a week. On the UH-1 ride back to Playa Grande, I had some time to draw a few conclusions about the situation in Guatemala. While disappointed by the lack of night operations and the generally slow approach to the mission, I had to admire their aggressiveness under fire, the professionalism of their junior officers and the outstanding morale of the troops. Guatemala demonstrates that if a government is serious about winning a guerrilla war, it can. The method is no secret: Concentration of forces against armed guerrilla bands, aggressive combat action by a well-trained military, a carrot-and-stick approach to gain popular support, and tight population control to separate the people from the guerrillas. In Guatemala's case, its efforts were enhanced by a relatively benevolent and

dedicated military dictatorship under Rios Montt that incorporated needed methods into a national plan and stuck to the plan over the long haul — something democracies, by their very nature, find difficult to do. I am not trying to laud the benefits of a dictatorship over a democracy in this appraisal. I would fight to the death if anyone threatened the democracy of the United States. Most dictatorships are self-centered and corrupt and cause many more problems than they solve. But in the rare circumstance that the man in power is an enlightened despot, there is no more efficient government on earth.

The bottom line is, Guatemala is now a democracy and has all the internal political diversity and turmoil that is endemic to a representative state. Its future looks bright. Its excellent anti-insurgent program has made it far more secure from a communist guerrilla takeover than most other countries in this volatile region. Guatemala has even begun a staff course, open to all non-communist nations, that teaches others to duplicate its success. Nations worldwide, including the United States, can learn valuable lessons from what has been done here. Those who choose to ignore these lessons do so at their own risk. ✕

## DISINFORMATION

Continued from page 69

rule. No mention of disappointing Soviet

and Cuban hopes of establishing a permanent beachhead in Central America. And one couldn't possibly guess that in a January 1987 poll of citizens of Nicaragua's closest neighbors — Costa Rica, El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala — conducted by a Gallup affiliate, from 70-77 percent of those asked "Will it be better for our own country if the Sandinista government forces win, or if the contra opposition forces win?" supported the contras.

Another driving force at CDI, and another distinction from the views of Lind and Luttwak, is that while these men and other monitoring organizations such as the CSIS, Heritage Foundation, and Brookings Institution seek to determine how the military can get the most bang for its buck, CDI advocates less bang for fewer bucks. Thus, while others would consider U.S. military needs strictly in terms of the degree of the Soviet threat, CDI insists on balancing them against the need for social programs. When La Rocque says, "When we were rich we could be the world's policeman, but now we have to squeeze the budget," he's not challenging the irrefutable evidence that America's gross national product is far higher than it's ever been, he's saying other considerations have become more important than defense. In a 1984 *Defense Monitor*, Marian Wright Edelman of the Children's Defense Fund, a large, Washington-based advocacy group which works to enlarge the welfare state on behalf of children, is quoted approvingly as saying:

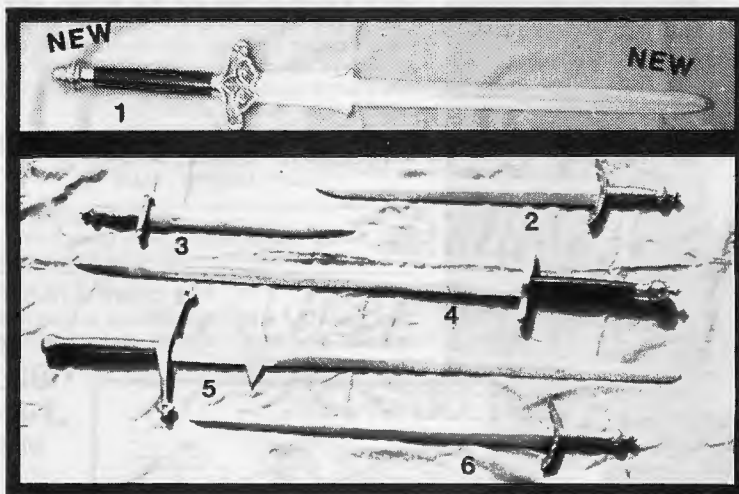
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But for 50 MXs, Edelman got her wish, yet somehow scrapping the MXs did little to alleviate poverty and educate women. Another *Defense Monitor* concentrated on U.S. military expenditures in defense of Japan and urged how those same funds could be used to make American industry more competitive with that nation's trade industry. Brian McCartan, an economist at CDI, told one reporter, "Picture one society that spends its time putting up walls and sharpening its spears, and another society that spends its time inventing wheels and things. In the long run, the second society will do much better." Unless, of course, it's wiped off the face of the earth by nuclear weapons.

There is truth in CDI's message. A society that cripples its economy and allows gross domestic discontent will also hinder its military capabilities. On the other hand, though, the Soviets have been getting away with it for the better part of a century. The point is, a strong economy and a contented population can allow for a mighty military. But by no means do they guarantee it, espe-

cially when the latter comes at the expense of the former. Such, as Jean-Francois Revel might put it, is how democracies perish.

Whatever the motivations of Admiral La Rocque and his crew — be it a desire for peace so strong as to let them continually give the Soviets the benefit of the doubt, just as France and England did Hitler before World War II, be it a desire for increased social programs which they know conflict with higher defense spending, or be it something darker — CDI's continual condemnation of America's most important weapons systems and one-sided criticism of the United States, casts great doubt on its claim that it advocates having a strong defense for our nation. Whether or not CDI is a Soviet front in the definite sense of the word, one is left asking, in columnist Joseph Sobran's words, "How would they act differently if they were?"

We might do well to hearken to the words of the almost 6,000 admirals who signed full-page advertisements in the *Washington Times* condemning CDI, and the words of one who didn't. "I believe that if La Rocque's ideas prevail," Admiral Zumwalt told the *Navy Times*, "my children will not live out their lives in freedom." ✖

## DENARD

Continued from page 73

subsidized by Pretoria, since he also main-

tains a house in South Africa and is a regular visitor to that country.

Through the Third World's tropical luxuriance and occasional tranquility, the glint of bayonets may often be seen. That is certainly true of the Comoros Archipelago.

We found Moroni, capital of the three independent islands of Grand Comoro, Anjouan and Mohéli (unlike Mayotte, the French island) to be far from anyone's idea of a tropical paradise. They were poor, dirty and expensive; a beer cost several dollars and a nip of whisky twice that. This was partly due to the prevailing Islamic law. Drink is far beyond the reach of the average believer, and infidels don't really count.

Moroni reminded me in many ways of the Zanzibar which I had visited in the late '60s. The people have the same Afro-Shirazi background; many of their forefathers came from either Africa or the Gulf States. They wear the same clothes, eat the same kind of food and preserve the same ancient customs.

You don't speak to a strange woman if she is married, and it is only during this century that they put a stop to amputation of the right hand of thieves.

In the local market of the capital you find a mixture of almost all the cultures of the Indian Ocean and farther afield: African, Arab, Malay, Malagasy, mulatto and white. Even the language is a compound of Swahili, French, African and Arab, and only the locals can understand it. Very few natives even suspect that there might be another



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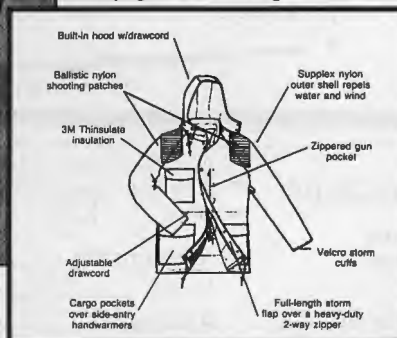
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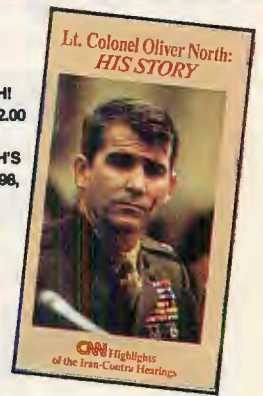
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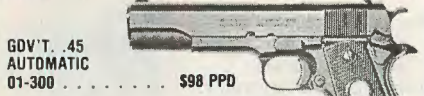
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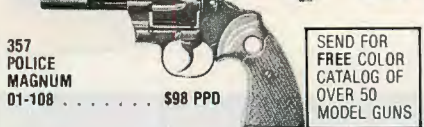
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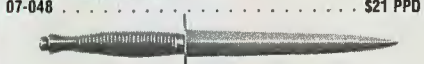


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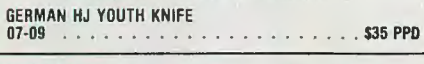
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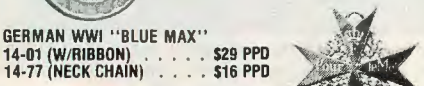
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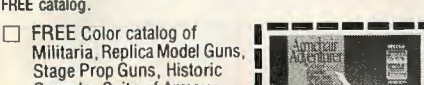
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language, such as English, far less understand it.

The buildings in Moroni are a blend of '50s French Colonial and Omani 19th century. The Arabs used to call the Comoros *Jazair el Kamar* — the Mountains of the Moon — and indeed the volcanic craters of all four islands present a lunar appearance.

The Comoros are part of a series of maritime volcanoes; the Comoro Ridge, which comprises a huge submarine range stretching the length of the Indian Ocean, pokes a head out of the water at irregular intervals. These low volcanoes are occasionally active, being part of the same chain that includes La Réunion — more than 1,000 kilometers to the southeast — which erupted in 1985.

French-speaking Mayotte is very different. Beautiful Mayotte — spectacular French Mayotte — is an atoll that most resembles the Tahiti of 30 years ago, or Martinique before the age of jet travel.

Tourists are welcome, but it is so far off the beaten sybaritic track that there isn't even a hotel fit for them.

The hotel that we stayed in at Dzoudzi, the capital of Mayotte, is also a brothel for French Foreign Legionnaires relaxing off duty.

Security on the islands (for Paris always takes this matter seriously) is in the hands of a substantial body of the French Foreign Legion, *le Détachement de la Légion Étrangère de Mayotte*. Their numbers are secret but their duties take them all over the French possessions in this corner of the Indian Ocean, including such outlying islands as Juan de Nova, near Madagascar, and the notorious Bassas da India atoll which has wrecked hundreds of ships over the centuries.

Recently there have been several very elaborate treasure seeking expeditions at Bassa, operating mostly from Durban. At least a dozen rich Portuguese, French, British and Dutch galleons and other sailing craft are known to have come to grief on a shallow Bassas atoll, the tip of which is visible as a series of coral breaks only at low tide. There have been shipwrecks on these reefs as recently as a few years ago. The currents are treacherous. In times past these treacherous channels and outlying islands have been home to pirates.

The work carried out by the Legionnaires in conjunction with the French navy is not very demanding. In fact, with some of the best scuba diving in any ocean and almost entirely unspoiled by tourists, it is a plum posting. It is no secret that Mayotte is reserved for those members of the French Foreign Legion who have won their spurs and are perhaps past week-long trudges in the Djibouti desert or nocturnal jumps into Shaba Province in Zaire.

We found a surprising number of Frenchmen in their ranks; many of the older hands, though, were German. Naturally they are a mixed bunch. There are few who have not seen active service, and almost all the old sweats had been wounded at least once.

Yet here too, in remote Mayotte, they are swathed in the kind of mystique of which legends are made. None of these men made

any secret of the fact that he had been given a new name, a new identity, for his service with the Legion.

Whether this job is soft or not, they are still a tough force and they take no nonsense from anybody. Discipline is as strict as ever, and despite (or because of) the delightful conditions, few of these soldiers put a foot wrong. If they did they would soon find themselves back in Corsica.

Mayotte itself is a pleasant enough place for a few days, but after that it becomes stifling. There is the ferry, which sets the tone and the time, but little else. The diving, of course, is beyond imagination. Then there is politics. Wherever two Frenchmen are gathered together on an island, there are automatically two political parties.

Much of the discussion these days is about whether France shall continue to rule over the islanders.

For their part, the people of Mayotte are determined to have no truck with independent Grand Comoro, pointing with disdain to the mercenaries and the succession of coups. Recently, however, President Ahmed Abdallah has made several territorial claims on Mayotte, much as the independence movements are active in New Caledonia in the Pacific. His demands for the assimilation of Mayotte have been supported by the majority of Third World countries in the United Nations.

Thus there is little love lost between the two sides, although it is still possible to fly between Grand Comoro and Mayotte or any of the other islands in the archipelago.

Although the age of egalitarianism has perceptibly arrived, we found little of the tension on Mayotte that we found on Grand Comoro. Under French rule there have been none of the revolutions, or even attempted coups, which are endemic all over Africa these days.

For those thinking of visiting the islands, it is easy to get a French visa for Mayotte. No visas are necessary for Grand Comoro; they are issued on arrival. Flights are direct to Moroni via Johannesburg (once a week) or to Mayotte via La Réunion, another French possession in the Indian Ocean, also served regularly from Johannesburg or from Paris directly.

All four islands *valent le detour*. They still have something now found nowhere else on this earth.

If you do go — take your diving gear!

## COMBAT WEAPONCRAFT

*Continued from page 29*

man steps away from the wall and kicks the door open. (For alternative methods of entry see "Combat Weaponcraft," August '87.) The hinge-side man runs into the room, crossing the doorway to the opposite side of the room. This man covers the room from the wall behind him to just past the

centerline of the wall in front of him.

As soon as the hinge-side man clears the doorway the knob-side man follows, covering the opposite side of the room. Both men should be inside far enough so as not to be backlit (silhouetted) by the doorway. Both areas of responsibility overlap at the center, so the room is completely covered. If a single two-man team is clearing several rooms, it will continue on, using the same entry tactics at each room.

The three-man entry begins with one man on either side of the door, plus the door kicker. When ready, the kicker forces the door open. The hinge-side man makes entry first, crossing to the opposite side of the room. The knob-side man enters second, crossing behind the first man. The kicker enters last, to cover the center of the room while the men on either side of him cover their respective sides of it. Again, the areas of responsibility overlap, so the entire room is covered.

The team entry is used when several men enter at the same point but must move on to cover multiple areas. An example would be the serving of a search warrant where entry is made through the front door, but several rooms need to be covered quickly to prevent the destruction of evidence. In a team entry each member must have a thorough understanding of the layout of the house and know exactly which room each will cover. The number of men used will be determined by the number of rooms to be covered and by considerations such as how many men will be needed to secure prisoners or escort hostages out.

While each Crisis Entry will be different, a team that uses proper planning and tactics, making an aggressive, quickly executed entry, will save lives and complete its mission successfully. ✕

## I WAS THERE

*Continued from page 24*

Souden's head. Souden is returning fire, but his aim isn't good, and he's drenching the knees of the guy next to his target. This aroma, combined with the killer farts from Gibbs, quickly attacks the whole planeload of people.

I see movement at the other end of the cabin as Lopez unloads remains of his breakfast on other trapped victims. Soon we have an epidemic on our hands. Correction. The epidemic is all over us. Even the strongest among us are barfing on guys across the aisle. The Air Force crew chief stands quietly in one corner with tears running down his cheeks. This same crew chief inspected our boots for mud as we entered his spotless airplane.

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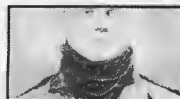
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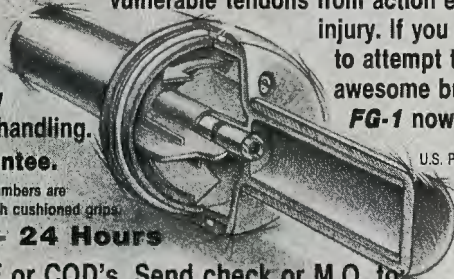
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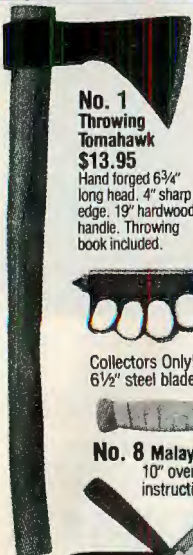
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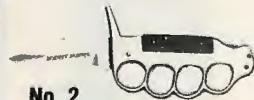
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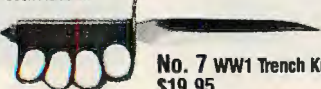
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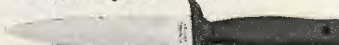


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Suddenly, I hear a loud shout and see the jumpmaster hold up his hand for the "Get ready!" command. I stagger to my feet and attach my static line to the anchor line cable above my head. In jump school they taught us a carefully organized series of commands that, if followed, would almost guarantee a safe, orderly exit from an aircraft in flight. In practice, things didn't often work that way. First, after we stand up, it is such a mob scene that most of us can't even see the jumpmaster, let alone hear him over engine noise and yelling. The best you can usually do is to make sure that your static line is properly hooked up, and that the guy in front of you hasn't fouled his static line.

Everything looks in order to me when Souden, who is in front of me, slumps back into his seat. I lean over and yell at him to get up, since we are about to jump. He yells back that he is too sick to move and asks me to unhook his static line. As we argue, I look up and see that troops are starting to leave the aircraft. I also realize that there is no way around the immobile Souden, because his line is hooked up ahead of mine on the cable.

I grab him and stand him up as the last jumper exits the plane. I manage to stagger to cabin's rear, pushing him and lifting on his main parachute pack. He hadn't quite emptied his stomach earlier and manages to leave his mark on every seat as we pass. We reach the door, and I release him and allow him to take a proper exit stance. I reach to push him, but he suddenly leaps out. As I jump, I notice a red warning light beside the door which means don't jump, and I hear myself saying "Oh shit," instead of "One thousand, two thousand." I hit a blast of wind, and it is like a giant has grabbed me and thrown me through the sky. Then my chute opens, and I welcome silence and the fresh air that fills my lungs.

Souden is only about 50 feet from me, and I call to him. He gives me a little wave, and I am glad to see that he hasn't puked himself to death. I look down and see that we have missed the drop zone and will land in some scrub oak trees. I also notice that we are moving sideways as well as down.

Wind! I had forgotten how windy it was. I start to untie my equipment and unhook one side of my reserve parachute, so I can rid myself of my gear as soon as I hit ground. Death by dragging is a very real possibility. I yell at Souden to do the same, but he just hangs in his harness as we near ground zero.

I prepare to land and notice that the ground is moving rapidly sideways instead of coming up to meet me as

usual. I hit earth in an explosion of sand and tree limbs and quickly roll to my feet and attempt to collapse my canopy. I am instantly jerked face first into sand and begin to drag through rocks and brush. I try the same maneuver twice with the same results and decide it's no use and elect to try to get out of my harness while I drag. As I plow through brush fumbling with tangled webbing, a tree branch snags my canopy, and I stop moving. There really is a God.

I untangle myself and stand up. Looking back across the drop zone, I can see perhaps 50 T-10 canopies drifting across the sand with troopers still attached. Their cries for help reach me as I set out to find Souden.

I find him in a gully where his chute has dragged him. His eyes are closed, and he is very still. Blood seems to be all over. As I kneel to help him, the stench of spaghetti vomit attacks me again. It isn't blood; it is partially digested Army issue spaghetti.

As I speak, his eyes flutter open, and he looks at clouds over my shoulder and whispers, "My back is hurt." I carefully remove his harness and try to make him comfortable. I ask him if he can move his toes, and he shakes his head. "Hold on," I tell him. "I'll get help."

It seemed like I ran for hours through deep sand before locating a medic jeep. We return to the spot where Souden is laying, and the medics soon have him loaded aboard a stretcher and into a jeep.

When I stumble into our company's assembly area, I'm greeted by the sight of bruised and ragged troops. Our training exercise is cancelled, and it appears that my friend Souden is a casualty. Bad news too — we have to walk back to our barracks.

As we trudge home, I think of all the good times Souden and I have shared. The girls of Danville, trips to Fayetteville, pizzas shared. I wonder if they can fix a broken back these days. I feel tears as I think of my broken friend.

We march slowly into our company area and are dismissed. Souden's equipment is sitting on his foot locker, and I'm happy to see that the medics have taken care of everything.

Bates and I agree to skip chow and grab a couple of beers and a burger at the E.M. club before we go to visit Souden at the hospital.

We enter the noisy club, and a loud, drunken voice greets us. A shout comes from a low life, scum-sucking, motherloving bastard that I have just decided to kill. Souden!

"Sit down guys," he says, "and I'll tell you a jump story." He was still laughing when I poured his beer over his head. ☒

## FULL AUTO

*Continued from page 16*

Browning Automatic Rifle's (BAR) tactical potential. Recoil operation is a mixed bag in squad automatics. Barrel changing is simplified and powder fouling is reduced, but there is no regulator, and the system must constantly operate at maximum energy levels. A tripod was also available, but quite useless as the barrel was too light to permit sustained fire, and the magazine capacity was too limited.

Finally, buried beneath a stack of Mauser rifles, I uncovered a Thompson Model 1921 submachine gun (serial No. 10964) inscribed "POLICIA DE EL SALVADOR" above and below the model and serial number markings on the left side of the upper receiver. Sadly, it was a rusted hulk that appeared to have been stored at the bottom of the Rio Lempa.

There was nothing more of interest other than several Belgian High Power pistols with the Salvadoran crest, which I found sharing a shelf with an assortment of corroded cavalry sabers and muzzle-loading percussion muskets of undetermined origin.

And there you have it. In this very small room were weapons produced by the United States, Great Britain, France, Spain, Belgium, Italy, Czechoslovakia and Switzerland — the great arms merchants of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. If they could but speak, what stories these guns could tell of the intrigues involved in their acquisition and the battles they had fought. But they remain silent and will, ironically, linger on long after those who designed, produced, sold, purchased and fought with them have turned to dust. ☒

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## DRAGON

*Continued from page 18*

American rations for the Sharp Swords at Unsan, thought the American rations contained too much meat and not enough vegetables. Lao concluded: "Americans eat the strangest things."

A certain amount of scuffling took place when Chinese units overran U.S. positions. The food was strange, but food was food. Wrist watches, .45 pistols and M1 Garands were primo booty. Chinese grunts dismissed .30 M1 Carbines as nearly worthless since they didn't have any stopping power. American grunts agreed.

Colonel Yang's battalion played a key role in the destruction of the U.S.

2nd Division (25-30 November) as it retreated down the Sunchon road, which ran through a canyon. He ambushed a 40-vehicle supply convoy on the 25th and while policing up weapons was stunned when his X.O. found he could talk to the prisoners in the Uighar dialect of northwestern China. The prisoners were Turks.

The next night, fighting a few kilometers down the road, Captain Lao's Sharp Swords descended to the bottom of the canyon to knock out a still active half-track from a 2nd Division unit decimated earlier in the day. After destroying the half-track, his troops began to scavenge for food and ammunition. Lao and some of his troops, including a cook named Fat Belly Wu and his helper, one Opium Li, discovered two American soldiers playing dead in the ditches along the road. While Lao's troops tried to get the half-track guns turned around to bear on American units expected to enter the ambush zone later, Lao questioned the prisoners, a Corporal Johnstone from Arkansas and a Woodstock from Maine. Ignoring shouts from Opium Li to shoot the prisoners, Lao questioned them about why they were fighting in Korea and why they had hung around in the kill zone after their unit had been destroyed that afternoon. Lao was much impressed by the fact that one of the men had a letter from the United States mailed only a week earlier. A yell from his troops warned Lao that more American vehicles were moving into the kill zone, and to the disgust of Opium Li, he told the two Americans, "Take off. Make for the mountains and move parallel with this road until you are across the Taedong River. Good luck." Opium Li was killed minutes later, and Lao was wounded.

A major Han Liqian, a staff officer for Peng, arriving in the recently recaptured North Korean capital of Pyongyang on 10 December, commented that the Americans had made a real mess of the city. One American named Kilroy had written his name everywhere. The Chinese thought it was some secret code.

Colonel Wong Lichan, riding down the road to Chinhung-ni, recaptured from American Marines just before Christmas 1950, was puzzled to spot snowmen on the hills. He knew children in Manchuria were in the habit of building snowmen, but he hadn't seen a child in two days. When an air alert forced his party to pull off the road, Colonel Wong approached the snowmen and was sickened when he realized they were the frozen, snow-coated Chinese soldiers and coolies. There were thousands of them along the road — part of the 450,000 troops China



was to lose before the war ended.

After the war, Captain Lao ended up as an English teacher in Shanghai. Colonel Yang became a military analyst in Peking. Colonel Wong moved to Macao after retiring from the Chinese army. Major Han Liqian was banished to a pig farm during the Cultural Revolution and emigrated to Hong Kong in 1980.

General Peng was made a marshal of the Chinese army in 1955 but fell out of power during the Cultural Revolution. Sent to do labor in the provinces, he was badly beaten and interrogated endlessly by Red Guards. Bedridden, he was deprived of the right to sit, to rise up, to drink water, to go to the toilet or turn over in bed. He died in 1974.

Today, in Pyongyang, North Korea, in a museum section dedicated to the great Patriotic Struggle, hidden among the maps, statuary and models showing how North Korea's Beloved Leader Kim Il Sung led his army to victory, is one small, fuzzy photograph showing Chinese troops crossing a bridge.

If questioned about China's role in the war the guides will admit: "Well, yes. We did have a little help from China, too." ✕

## SERPENT

*Continued from page 79*

would never wake up again.

The Israeli commandos blew the heavy steel front and rear doors with almost no sound, using a newly-developed but, as yet, undisclosed technology. A Team immediately rushed into the house, while B Team secured the other entrances and the basement. A Team ran up the stairs toward Abu Jihad's bedroom, killing a guard on the way. Another guard and a caretaker died at the hands of B Team. A document specialist from B Team entered the first-floor study and cleaned it out.

The members of A Team assembled momentarily outside the door to Abu Jihad's bedroom, then burst in, weapons leveled. Apparently alerted by the noise outside his bedroom, Abu Jihad had groggily raised his head from his pillow, while his wife slept soundly next to him. The Israeli commandos pumped nearly 70 rounds into the PLO leader, but did not harm his wife. Then they withdrew as rapidly as they had come.

The whole thing was over in 13 seconds, which is the amount of time that elapsed from the breaching of the front door to the moment the first members of A Team began exiting the house.

Slowly, deliberately, so as not to raise alarm if unseen eyes were watching, the commandos left the house and boarded the

waiting vehicles. Once C Team, which had secured the withdrawal, was aboard, the drivers released the handbrakes of the vehicles and they began coasting down the long sweeping hill in front of Abu Jihad's. D Team was picked up on the way. Seconds later, the commandos switched on the ignitions of their vehicles and headed back toward the beach at Ras Carthage.

After they were underway, a Mossad agent in one of the vehicles broke out cans of Tunisian soda pop and passed them around. The commandos reached Ras Carthage without incident and quickly boarded the Zodiacs and sped back toward the missile boats. The Mossad agents left behind in Tunis boarded different flights and left the country. It took the missile boats four days to reach Israel, during which time they were under the watchful eye of the Israeli air force.

### Aftermath

After the Israelis fled the house, Abu Jihad's wife, Um Jihad, also a top PLO official, flicked on the light and found her husband on the floor next to the bed in a pool of blood. Because the telephone lines were dead, she rushed out to the balcony and screamed for help. However, no one came to her assistance until her daughter, Hanan, ran next door and woke up Abu Masen's household.

Later, Um Jihad would tell the media that she confronted the Israeli commandos and turned to face the wall so they could kill her, which they declined to do. She also claimed that a blonde woman working with the Israelis videotaped the actual killing. She even went so far as to suggest that her husband had been awake, working late, when the commandos burst in, and that he had drawn his own gun from a desk drawer in self defense. The facts, nevertheless, do not support her contentions.

In reality, no one lingered over Abu Jihad's body. No one took pictures or videotaped the scene. It may well be that Um Jihad, having been awakened from a sound sleep, mistook the night vision devices worn by the commandos for camera lenses. Moreover, no one spoke to Um Jihad or her daughter; the commandos withdrew as quickly as they came. Um Jihad's denial that her husband had died in bed probably stems from her belief that his death should be portrayed less ignominiously; thus she conjured up the story that he went down fighting.


In the days that followed the raid, the United States and most of the world community condemned the killing of Abu Jihad. In the United States, the media widely reported it as a "political assassination," oblivious to the fact that Abu Jihad was a soldier waging war on Israel and therefore a legitimate military target. To date, no one has been named to succeed Abu Jihad. This could indicate internal rifts within the PLO, or it might suggest that no one really wants the job for fear that they might become the next Israeli target. ✕

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# PRACTICALLY LETHAL

Continued from page 31

Likewise, soldiers operating in heavily wooded terrain might find that the extra weight of a chopper is more than compensated for by its usefulness as a chopping tool. At the same time, it is by far the most devastating of the three varieties as a weapon. However, in general it is not a weapon capable of the sort of stealth associated with a dagger.

All three varieties have useful applications. Understanding the strengths and weaknesses of each — killing instrument versus cutting tool, for example — is the key to making the right choice as to which you carry. The type of knife to choose is a matter of circumstance, personal preference, and sometimes even tradition. After all, a Gurkha will almost always prefer a Kukri and a Finn a puuko, regardless of other factors. There is no way one can dictate to another what is the best combat knife for him, if for no other reason than a large percentage of a knife's value is psychological. What you feel best with is probably what you should carry. I only ask that you keep an open mind and recognize that knives of every type have strengths and weaknesses, and each category has its role in the world of combat knives. ✂

# KILLING EFFECT

Continued from page 63

sponded with another 115-grain hollow-point (with a copper jacket instead of the usual aluminum one) driven at still higher velocity — 1,235 fps. They went from bad to worse. This new bullet's penetration potential is even less than the standard 9mm Silvertip because of even greater over-expansion accompanied by excessive fragmentation. It appears that neither the manufacturers nor most law enforcement agencies understand the basic principles of wound ballistics. We can blame most of this on the ill-advised Relative Incapacitation Index.

Winchester's 185-grain .45 ACP Silver-tip is no better. The current version expands to a diameter of .85 caliber but only penetrates 10.4 inches in soft tissue. Remington's 185-grain .45 ACP hollow-point is almost as anemic.

It just goes on and on — effective performance constantly sacrificed on the altar of high velocity. Are there no suitable handgun cartridges in any caliber? There are some but at this time only a few.

Those who carry a .38 Special would be best advised to employ the so-called FBI load, a 158-grain lead hollow-point traveling out of a 4-inch barrel at 880 fps. It will expand to .58 caliber and penetrate 12.5 inches of soft tissue. That's just barely adequate, but it's far better than the lighter



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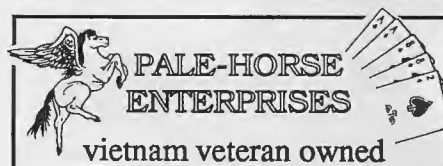
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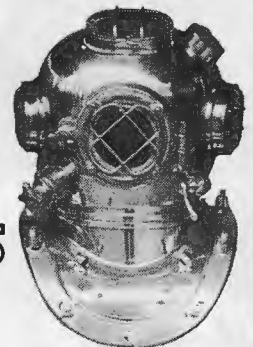
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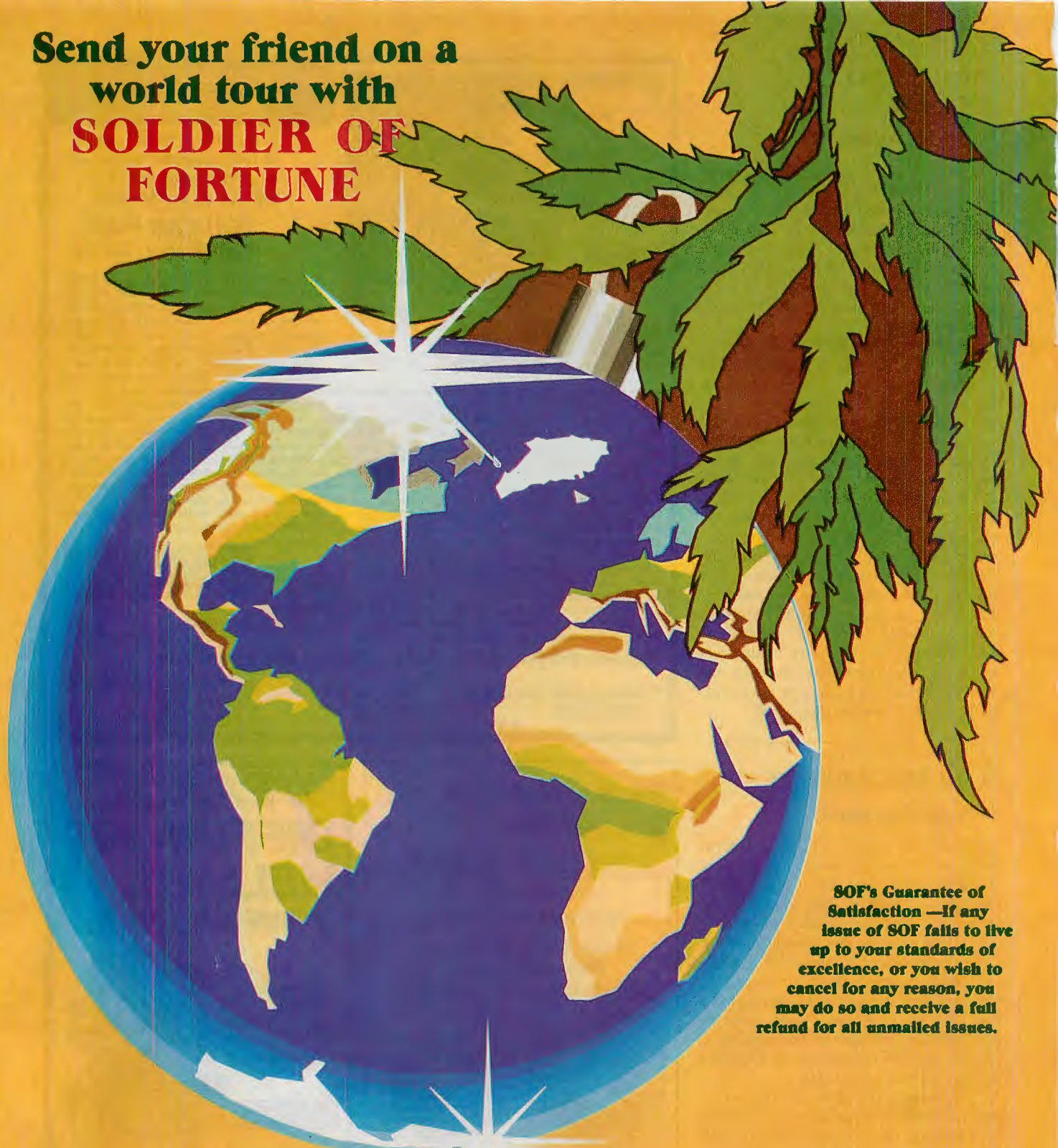
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and faster Silvertip. The minimum bullet weight required to achieve the necessary performance in calibers .38 Special, .357 Magnum and 9mm Parabellum is 125 grains. Bullets weighing up to 160 grains would be superior.

Stung by the now infamous Miami shoot-out, the FBI has just dropped the Silvertip and adopted what is currently the most effective 9mm Parabellum loading: Winchester's 147-grain jacketed hollow-point subsonic cartridge. Referred to as the OSM (Olin Super Match), its bullet leaves a pistol muzzle at approximately 975 fps, with penetration in soft tissue of almost 15 inches and expansion to about .60 caliber. Before you applaud Olin for getting the message, be advised that this cartridge was developed at the request of the U.S. Department of Defense for use with suppressed sub-machine guns. Furthermore, rumor has it that after Olin completes the U.S. government contract, and prior to releasing the 9mm OSM cartridge on the commercial market, it intends to soup up its velocity. Firing this cartridge through submachine guns (whose longer barrels increase the velocity) has already established that even a marginal increase in velocity will increase expansion while decreasing the penetration and effectiveness of this round.

As it has the potential for making the biggest hole, the .45 ACP round would clearly be our best choice, if a 230- to 260-grain mushrooming bullet were available and propelled at no greater velocity than required to expand it to about .75 to .80 caliber and no more. It can be done, but until it is we're stuck with the 230-grain FMJ (Full Metal Jacket) ball round. While it will penetrate almost 26 inches of soft tissue, it neither expands nor yaws significantly in the target, and its wound track is not much greater than the bullet diameter. Again, some will wring their hands in consternation about over-penetration. That's bunkum. The chance of an innocent bystander getting hit as a consequence of this bullet exiting out the backside of your opponent is less than that of getting struck by lightning.

The situation with regard to handgun ammunition is abysmal. Manufacturers have spent far too many years chasing after the RII's high velocity rainbow. What can we do about it? For one thing, don't buy these bantam-weight, super-velocity dreams. We don't need a glittering array of new calibers either. We need effective ammunition for the pistols we already slam into our holsters. Demand that manufacturers provide heavy hollow-points (or soft-points) driven at moderate velocities, that will penetrate sufficiently and expand reliably. A pistol's potential is limited enough without further weakening it by defective bullet designs. Someone out there has got to be capable of delivering a heavy, expanding, slow-moving pumpkin to stuff in our Colt .45s. ❌



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## ABU NIDAL

Continued from page 81

on how to conduct terrorist operations. The base in the Bekaa is located in a Syrian-controlled area, and intelligence sources believe that he maintains it largely as a point of liaison with the Syrians.

In addition, Abu Nidal has also opened a local headquarters in Sidon, in south Lebanon, which processes and trains new recruits and represents his interests in the area. There are recent reports that he is trying to establish a shadow network in the occupied West Bank and Gaza, and that the Israelis have exposed at least two of his cells.

Today, Abu Nidal and his gang maintain ties to a variety of other terrorist organizations, including the Japanese Red Army (Arab Section), the Irish Republican Army (IRA), the Red Army Faction (West Germany), the Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia (ASALA), the *Cells Combatante Communiste* (CCC) of Belgium, and what is left of Action Direct (France).

Unlike most other terrorist groups, the Abu Nidal organization buys its weapons on the open market in the arms bazaars of the world. Sometimes the weapons are shipped to operatives in Libyan or Syrian diplomatic pouches.

The Abu Nidal organization's annual budget is estimated to be in the neighborhood of \$20 million a year. Libya provides \$14 to \$15 million of the budget, with the balance coming from other Arab governments and from a network of companies that Abu Nidal and the organization surreptitiously own. Iraq's last cash payment to Abu Nidal was in 1983 and Syria's in 1985.

Abu Nidal also maintains close ties to Eastern bloc intelligence and regularly travels in and out of eastern Europe. Indeed, CIA sources report that he actually maintains offices in Poland and East Germany. According to former Director of Central Intelligence (DCI) Bill Casey, "The Soviets don't run him or control him, but they use him and his group for their own purposes."

### The Hunt for Abu Nidal

Abu Nidal remains the most elusive and mysterious terrorist leader in the world. According to a former anti-terrorism advisor to the Israeli prime minister, "Abu Nidal does not use his own travel documents, even when going from one safe country to another. He does not attend major gatherings and only rarely talks to his people. He is always on the move, or behind the Iron Curtain. He hands his orders, in written form, to three operators who are very close to him. He has only one aide." In addition, it is believed that he never speaks by telephone, which he regards as unsafe, nor has he ever been heard on a radio broadcast. No one even knows for certain what he looks like. The photo most often reproduced of him, allegedly taken in North Korea, may not be genuine. At the very least, it is at 15 years old.

Yet, the search for Abu Nidal continues.

On 9 September 1986, CIA chief Bill Casey was in a jubilant mood. He was seated behind the broad desk in his imposing office on the third floor of the Old Executive Office Building, adjoining the White House. As the first DCI with cabinet rank, Casey also was the first to have an office in the White House complex.

"We have located Abu Nidal's main headquarters," he told a visitor. Contrary to previous intelligence, said Casey, Abu Nidal was living on a secret base in Lebanon's Bekaa Valley.

Casey confirmed that the United States and Israel were considering a joint strike against Abu Nidal, either to destroy his base of operations or to snatch him and bring him back to the United States to stand trial for his role in the Rome and Vienna airport attacks. However, locating a terrorist leader and actually having the time to pull together an operation against him is not the same thing. One high official in the Reagan Administration compared it to "trying to paint a moving train."

Nevertheless, Ronald Reagan wanted Abu Nidal. According to senior U.S. policymakers, Reagan was profoundly affected by the death of an 11-year-old American girl, Natasha Simpson, in the Rome airport attack, and he ordered Nation-

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al Security Council planners to hit Libya, which had given aid and assistance to Abu Nidal, at the next opportunity. This was the real genesis of the April 1986 U.S. bombing raid on Libya, not the terrorist bombing of a West Berlin disco in early April. Even after the raid, however, Reagan was not satisfied, and ordered stepped-up U.S. efforts to find Abu Nidal. Although Oliver North had said that the United States was ready to go to "the ends of the earth" in order to bring Abu Nidal to justice for his role in the Rome and Vienna attacks, the operation envisioned by Casey never materialized. It was overtaken by both events and the so-called Iran-Contra crisis. By the time that Israeli intelligence could get a fix on the secret base, Abu Nidal had flown the coop. Subsequent efforts to track him down were sidetracked by the firing of Oliver North and Bill Casey's incapacitation.

The Israelis, on the other hand, have not slackened their efforts to kill or capture Abu Nidal. When he attacked the Istanbul synagogue, he signed his death warrant, if he had not done so already.

Former Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin never believed that Abu Nidal had actually split with Yasir Arafat. The Abu Nidal terrorist group, according to Begin, was simply a successor to Black September and other deniable units of the PLO. "He [Abu Nidal] is the secret arm of those who want to disguise their real intentions," a top ranking Arab intelligence official has confirmed.

Today, intelligence organizations from the United States, Israel, several conservative Arab regimes, and a few European nations monitor Abu Nidal's activities on a continuous basis. However, only the Israelis are actively hunting him. Although the PLO has allegedly sentenced him to death and put a price on his head, there is no evidence that they have ever really tried to get him, even when they knew where he was.

Abu Nidal's name has been at the top of the Israeli "most wanted" list for some time. Since the mid-1980s they have labeled Abu Nidal and his group as "enemy number one" of the state of Israel and its people.

The prevailing notion within the Israeli intelligence community is that once they eliminate Abu Nidal himself, his organization will lose its momentum and dynamism, if not cease to exist altogether. In order to target him, the Israelis have established an inter-agency group composed of top-ranking officials from the Mossad, AMAN (Israeli military intelligence), and the Shin-Bet (Israel's internal security agency), together with representatives from the prime minister's office (the anti-terrorism advisor's office) and the foreign ministry.

The needs and requirements of the inter-agency group are given priority with respect to the tasking and allocation of intelligence assets. To the extent possible, the group monitors every move the terrorist leader makes, every meeting with his couriers, every contact with a foreign government. Their goal, of course, is to assemble all of

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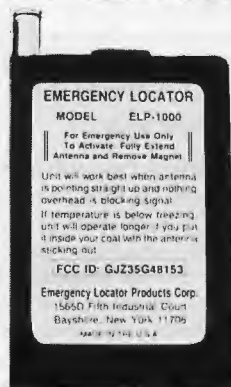
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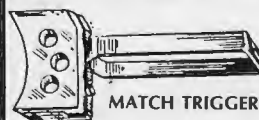
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the operational intelligence that will be required to carry out a successful hit.

At least twice in recent months, the inter-agency group felt that it had reliable intelligence indicating that Abu Nidal was in "reachable" locations. On both occasions, Mossad intelligence-gathering teams were sent to the suspected locations to assemble operational data. One of the locations was Libya, however, and it appears that he left the country before a commando operation against him could be successfully mounted. On the other occasion, which involved a place far more distant from Israel, the Mossad team was unable to positively locate him.

In recent weeks, according to U.S., Israeli, and Arab intelligence sources, Abu Nidal has retreated behind the Iron Curtain, perhaps as a prelude to a new terrorist offensive against Israel, Europe, or the United States. He most likely is in Bulgaria, where in the past his host, Bulgarian intelligence, has provided him with an official security detail. The July 1988 attack in which four Arab terrorists (possibly one Frenchman) opened up with automatic weapons and grenades on the crowded Greek cruise ship *City of Poros*, killing 11 and injuring more than 50, had all of the hallmarks of an Abu Nidal operation. It bears many operational similarities to the attacks on the Rome and Vienna airports and the Istanbul synagogue. If Abu Nidal is definitely linked to the *City of Poros* massacre, it will represent simply one more reason why the victimized nations of the West should mount an international expedition to destroy Abu Nidal and his band of killers. ☒

## 82ND AIRBORNE

*Continued from page 59*

authors of the report was that neither during the planning nor the early part of the operation did the initial assault units know whether they would be reinforced. One Ranger commander remarked how surprised he had been to see the 82nd start arriving. He had no idea it was participating at all.

It was a combination of all these factors that kept progress to a crawl on the 26th and 27th in the extreme south.

Trobaugh's orders for the 28th, given while still without radio contact with the Marines only a kilometer away, saw Silvasy's brigade linking up with the 2nd/8th BLT, while Scott's men cleared Lance aux Epines.

The fourth day should see the critical southwestern area of the island secured. But now it was being rumored that hundreds of Cubans and PRA had taken to the hills, with the prospect of a protracted campaign of jungle type operations to get them out. This was viewed with dismay.

On the morning of the 28th, the leading platoon of Hamilton's 2nd/325th moved carefully along the coastal road from Grand Anse toward St. George's. The platoon commander was unaware of the locations of

any of the Marines in the town and did not have radio contact with them. Suddenly up ahead was a road block. After some hesitation and confusion, it was realized that it was not the PRA, but Marines — F Company. They had reached the Ross Point Inn. The linkup between TF 121 and TF 124 had at last been achieved.

It was during that Friday that General Trobaugh received the remainder of his infantry reinforcements. Around 1100 hours Lieutenant Colonel Keith Nightengale's 2nd/505th flew in, followed late that night by the 2nd/508th under Lieutenant Colonel Ralph Newman. Trobaugh now had two brigades, each of three battalions, with which to consolidate the U.S. hold on Grenada. For another four days there would also be the Marines, but they never came under Trobaugh's command. By that evening little progress had been made on the ground in the southwest. Scott's HQ was near the Sugar Mill, and Crocker's 1st/505th had occupied the Lance aux Epines peninsula, discovering, almost four days after the landings at Salines, 183 students and 20 citizens of the United States, United Kingdom and Canada still awaiting rescue. Many of them had had a grandstand view of the Ranger's descent on the Tuesday morning. Their houses were only 2,000 meters east of the runway.

It was not until the 29th, perhaps as a result of Trobaugh's visit to the *Guam* on that day, that the 82nd exerted itself sufficiently to probe out beyond the confines of the southwestern toe of the island. Searches were made of the Mt. Harman Estate and the Egmont (Calvigny) area, but it was left to the new arrivals, the 2nd/508th, to make the major effort of the day. A reconnaissance in force took them as far east as the village of Crochu, only 1,500 meters from the sea. There was confusion at the start, because Newman was expecting to be accompanied by some of the Marines' M-60 tanks, but why they were thought necessary on that tortuous road across the island over the hills is uncertain. Had they gone with the infantry, progress would have been reduced to a crawl, but they did not. Somebody came up with the idea, quite rightly, that the small bridges might not take their weight. Beyond that, the planned route would take the force over the boundary into the Marines' area of responsibility, and there was some argument before this was accepted.

Mounted on loaned Grenadian trucks and U.S. vehicles, the column from 2nd/508th made remarkable progress in comparison with the previous four days. First the men uncovered the alternative supply dump that the PRA had tried to establish at Good Hope Estate (near Corbeau). Here they found five trucks packed with ammunition, with another seven loads dumped on the ground. They continued eastward through village after village, meeting no resistance whatsoever, the people being delighted to wave them on, or even to provide more vehicles if any with the force broke down. St. Pauls, Vineyard, Vincennes, Thebaide, Pomme

Rose and finally Crochu; 18 kilometres across the breadth of the island; it was the furthest single advance of the entire operation.

On Sunday, 30 October, General Vessey and Admiral McDonald arrived on Grenada. Although outwardly cheerful and smiling as he drove around St. George's, Vessey was disappointed with Trobaugh and the 82nd for the slowness of their operations. Three and a half days to advance five kilometers against a few snipers was not very impressive, even if the force had lacked vehicles initially. Vessey pushed Trobaugh to get moving. Grand Etang, up in the mountains, was said to be a PRA base with stockpiles of arms and equipment. If Cubans and Grenadians were making for the hills, why was Grand Etang still unsecured? Trobaugh sent Hamilton with the 2nd/325th. Like the 2nd/508th further south the day before, Hamilton's men were unopposed and found little except an abandoned APC and some suspicious tunnels. The battalion remained in the Grand Etang area for the night.

In the south, the 82nd was also on the move, this time to the Fort Jeudy peninsula and Westerhall Point. An East German named Jonas had been questioned by the CIA and revealed the location of the PRA's General Austin. Jonas was enlisted to play the role of Judas and lead in C Company, 2nd/505th. Around 1500, after some confusion as to which house to surround, the paratroopers cordoned the area, and Jonas shouted to Austin to come out. Agitated voices were heard inside, but after a short pause the PRA's leadership emerged, betrayed by an East German anxious to save his own skin. Instead of boarding a yacht for Guyana, General Austin and his associates went by truck and helicopter to the brig on the *Gum*.

Also, 31 October saw the Marines re-embarking onto their ships in preparation for the Carriacou landings and subsequent departure from Grenada, leaving the island to the 82nd and the CPF. While the CPF concentrated on policing and security duties in St. George's, the troopers of the 82nd continued to conduct searches or arrest PRA suspects for interrogation. On 2 November, as the Marines sailed for the Mediterranean, hostilities were declared to be at an end. The next day Metcalf's TF 120 was disestablished, and operational control of all U.S. forces in Grenada passed to General Trobaugh, as Commander U.S. Forces Grenada.

The mopping-up phase of Urgent Fury involved prolonged searching of people and houses, followed in many instances by arrests and interrogation. Hundreds of suspects were rounded up, mainly on information provided by fellow Grenadians, and sent to an improvised detention center run by the 82nd's Military Police at Salines.

By 15 November the initial screening of prisoners was complete, so the center was closed, all the detainees who were likely to face charges being handed over to CPF authorities at Richmond Hill Prison, by then re-opened to receive PRA guests. ✕

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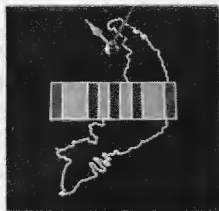
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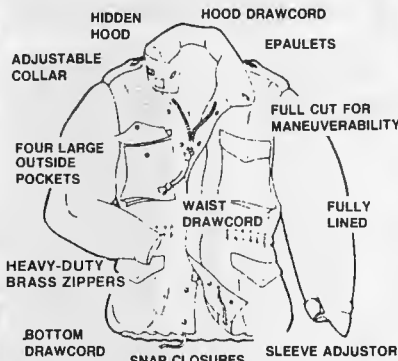
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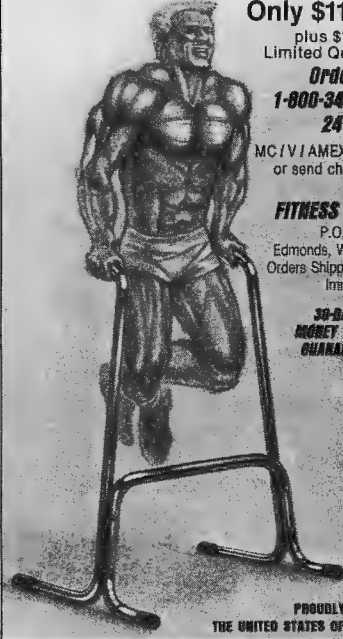
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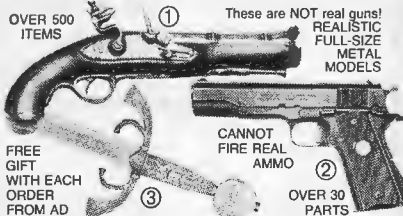
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# PARTING SHOT

by William K. Lane, Jr.

## From Saigon to Central Casting

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**M**OVIES about Vietnam are the latest phase in Hollywood's nonstop assault on the American spirit. The films are often accompanied, in the print media and on TV, by advice from Vietnam veterans groups, "outreach" organizations, and the like, that we who fought in that conflict should see these movies only with a "support group." One organization advised us not to see "Platoon" alone; another cautioned us to spend time "decompressing with friends after it." We've been told about the danger of "nightmares" and warned of the ultimate horror: "flashbacks." Jane Fonda, our dart-board version of World War II's Betty Grable, claims she and a group of veterans "wept" in a theater lobby after seeing the movie.

Excuse me while I barf.

This ludicrous blubbering and psychobabble has puzzled me for 17 years. Every unveiling of a Vietnam memorial on TV news seems to star the same two central-casting vets wearing fatigues — both bearded, one with pony tail — hugging each other and sobbing. It's embarrassing.

The other image is created by the cultural termites in Hollywood: the American soldier in Vietnam as racist, neurotic, drug crazed, feral, a hopeless pawn of a rotten society sent to fight an unjust war. Even the cartoonish Rambo character is a societal misfit, a mumbling killer exorcising his demons in a revenge ritual.

The vast majority of men who fought in that war — people like me — simply do not fit any of those images. Many of us are embarrassed by them, especially in the presence of veterans of Iwo Jima and Midway and Pork Chop Hill — most of whom saw much more horror than Vietnam soldiers ever did and managed to continue their lives without whining, acting nutty, or looking for a free ride.

This is not to say that Nam was not a searing experience. Indulge me as I present some images I dredged up in an attempt to stimulate a few "flashbacks."

I arrived in Vietnam in early 1968, as

green as the beret I wore, and was assigned to the Special Forces "A" team that had the dubious distinction, two weeks later, of being one of the first attacked during the Tet offensive. My memories of that battle are of the incredible roar and chaos that occurs when two rifle companies open up on each other; of a day and a night pinned down behind tombstones in a Buddhist cemetery; of picking up a terrible sweet smell for the first time and knowing instinctively that it was death.

I remember an old French priest who insisted I follow him during a lull in the battle because he wanted me to see a "bullet" in his church. The bullet turned out to be a howitzer shell that had come through an open window and embedded itself in the steps of the altar without exploding. We got "the bullet" out for him when things calmed down a week or so later, but I do remember genuflecting as I left the church in awe, and then going back to the grim work.

I can still see the terror in the eyes of the North Vietnamese prisoners brought before me. I was the first American they had ever seen, tall and blond (then), and undoubtedly going to kill them. They nearly collapsed in relief when I handed each of them a few of my Luckies and told them, "No sweat."

I remember the exhilaration brought about by extreme fatigue and our victory over the North Vietnamese regiment that had invaded our area. And I recall the curses, the hatred we felt when the *New York Times* clips arrived claiming the Vietnamese and American victory in the Tet offensive was actually a defeat.

There were other vignettes that haven't faded: A boy in a nearby village with a twisted foot caused by a badly-healed break. We begged his mother for months to let us take him into Nha Trang and have it fixed. Finally she relented, tearfully, not quite trusting us. Our medic sneaked the boy into an American hospital under care of a doctor who was part of our conspiracy. We gave him back to his mother, in a cast, with a leg as good as new. The whole village got drunk with us.

We got drunk on Thanksgiving day as well, after the giggling Vietnamese told us the "deer" we had eaten with them for Thanksgiving dinner was actually a dog.

I remember trying to cram a year of

good times into a week of R&R in Singapore, and then landing back in Vietnam at the air base, hung over and depressed, only to be mortared in the terminal.

But many of the starkest of memories are the bad ones. A newly married lieutenant dead after less than a week in the country, a sergeant killed in a firefight when another American shot him accidentally, piles of dead North Vietnamese, dead South Vietnamese, dead Montagnards, a dead old man in his bed in a house wrecked by battle; heat, fear, concussion, the frenzy of fighting out of an ambush.

Bad things, but no worse than many other bad things in life: car wrecks, the death of loved ones. Being fired probably can be as traumatic as being fired upon. And besides, Nam was a long time ago.

I still know where a few of my teammates are. I get a few cards at Christmas. Sometimes I see one or two and hear about others. Some did a few more tours in Nam after I left. A couple are still in the Army. Some have done better than others, but I'll bet you this: None of them would need a "support group" to go see a movie. None of them would indulge in prattle about "post-traumatic-stress disorder" and how it caused them to beat up their wives or wet their beds. None of them would be a party to the Agent Orange hustle.

And none of them would go to an Army-Navy surplus store and buy jungle fatigues and put them on and hug each other and cry for the cameras because no one gave them a parade.

The men I knew in Vietnam didn't hate each other because of race. We weren't on drugs. We didn't murder civilians. We didn't hate the Army or LBJ or our country. We didn't feel America owed us a free ride because we spent time defending it. We were our own "support group" over there. We don't need one here.

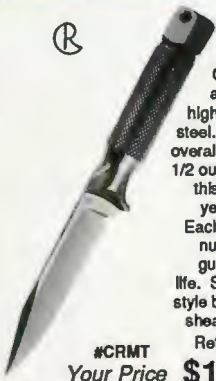
I've met hundreds of Viet vets over the years, and I've yet to encounter one who fits the prevailing stereotypes. There are veterans from all our wars who are sick or depressed or drug addicted, and by all means they deserve our help and comfort. Those who were legitimately disabled deserve a special, revered status in our society. But can't we stop the fictional stereotyping that simply doesn't fit the majority of Vietnam veterans?

Some of the bravest and best men that ever wore an American uniform fought in that war. They deserve better than to be caricatured by Hollywood and represented in the media as a legion of losers.

*Bill Lane served as executive officer of a Special Forces A Team during his tour in 1968, and currently works as a speech writer in Connecticut.*

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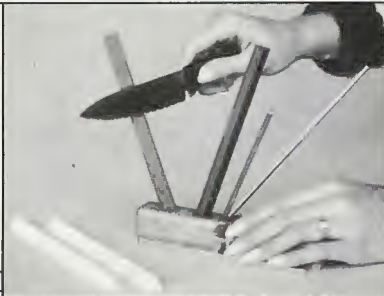


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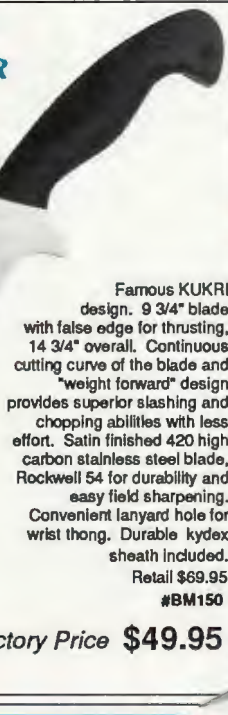
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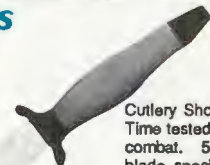
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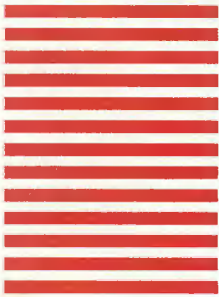
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